

**A CIVIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF BRIDE-PRICE AMONG
THE MAMBWE PEOPLE OF MBALA DISTRICT OF ZAMBIA'S NORTHERN
PROVINCE**

BY

MUSONDA FRANCIS

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DECLARATION

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APPROVAL

This dissertation done by Musonda Francis has been approved for examination as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Civic Education by the University of Zambia.

Examiner 1	Signature	Date
.....

Examiner 2	Signature	Date
.....

Examiner 3	Signature	Date
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is in honour and remembrance of my late daughter, Chanda Shekinah Musonda and my late father, Mr. Musonda G. Cassius. I also dedicate this work to my dear wife, Gladys M. Musonda, and children Chikwanda Chanda and Zoe Maka, and to my lovely mother, Nsama Mary.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province, from a civic perspective. The research employed a qualitative approach. A qualitative based research approach was used because of being particularly concerned with the way in which people understand and give meaning to their social world. A Case Study design was applied. The target population included marriage counsellors, village headmen and marriage men and women. A sample of 26 participants was used which comprised of four (4) marriage counsellors, four (4) village headmen and eighteen (18) married men and women. Purposive sampling procedure was used in the selection of participants. The research employed focus group discussion and structured interview as research instrument. The researcher employed thematic analysis method complimented by in-depth explanations presented in narrative form as obtained from the participants, summarizing of key findings as well as the interpretations.

The study found bride-price to be a historical cultural practice that is used to validate or solemnize marriages. Bride-price is paid in form of money or in kind. In traditional societies bride-price has had a cultural significance of legitimizing marriages. The study revealed a number of positive implications that included, sign of respect and honour, sign of love and act as a unifier and solidification of marriages. However, the findings revealed that bride-price has had been changing i.e. it has been "dynamic" from time to time, and because of modernization the practice has been influenced by social, economic and cultural changes. Its historical integrity, benefits and its significance have been affected. From the research findings, bride payment is linked to be among the causes of gender inequalities in households by contributing to male dominance in marriages, women sexual abuse in marriages, limited decision making for women and economic burden on the part of men.

The study recommends that the government through line ministries in collaboration with traditional leaders and civil society organisations should come up with sensitisation programmes for married people and those intending to marry and explain the cultural significance of bride-price. Government should also come up with legislative laws on the minimum and maximum amount to pay as bride-price. The act of refunding bride-price in ill-health marriages has to be abolished.

Keywords: *Bride-price, marriage, civic, masculinity, femininity and customs.*

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study which aimed at establishing the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province. The chapter will also focus on the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, general research objectives, specific research objectives, purpose of the study, delimitation of the study, significance of the study, and limitations of the study. Conceptual framework and theoretical framework on which the study was based will also be highlighted as well as the definitions of operational terms.

1.2 Background of the Study

Civic education is a multifaceted and a contestable concept that covers a wide range of civic issues. Civic issues are principles, mechanisms, and processes of decision making, participation, practices, beliefs, traditions, governance, and legislative controls that exist in various communities. The term "civic" in itself refers to any community in which the shared connections between people are at a broader level than that of the extended family (including the state) (Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, and Jenkins, 2002). Civic issues also encompass various aspects of life that include issues of gender, culture, legal education, democracy, and human rights among others.

Marriage is a civic practice that is found in all human societies and it is usually embedded in gender and cultural issues. Marriage is an institution whose origin can be traced as far back as the beginning of human existence on planet earth and it exists in all human societies. Falana (2019:133) defines marriage as "a legally recognized relationship, established by a civil or religious ceremony, between two people who intend to live together as sexual and domestic partners". Another scholar, Westermarck in Sambe, (2013:65-70) defines marriage as a more or less durable connection between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of the offspring. Then Sambe, (2013:65-70) considers marriage to be a relationship of one or more men to one or more women that is recognized by law or custom.

It is a common understanding that every society needs marriages and that any community that lacks marriage is bound to have its families fail (Chewe, 2013). Further, it goes without a doubt that this civic practice of marriage is the foundation and substance of every family and social unit in every society (Chilufya, 2008). In most African countries, Zambia included, marriage has been characterized with a number of cultural practices and traditions that are done from courtship to the time of wedding and even continue throughout marriage life. One such practice is bride-price.

Bride-price also known as bride-wealth or *Lobola* is one of the civic and oldest traditional practices that have had an influence, and is still influencing the institution of marriage. Bride-price is a custom that has been in existence for a long time as far back as 3000 Before Christ Era (BCE). The custom of bride-price was practiced by the ancient civilizations of the Egyptians, the Mesopotamians, Hebrews, Aztecs and Incas (Anderson 2007: 132–53). It is also historically on record that the Germanic tribes dated from 2000 BCE who ruled Western Europe from the 600 to 1000 CE (Christ Era) used bride-price as a way of legalizing marriages. Without it the purported marriages were not recognized from both the men's and women's families (Hughes, 1985).

In most societies in the world, such as in the Middle East under the Islamic law bride-price is a civic legal requirement for a valid marriage. Even in some of the Asian societies like China and Taiwan the practice of bride-price has been in existence. The Ethnographic Atlas presented that in the African continent about 83 per cent of the African societies have been practicing bride-price, Zambian society is not exceptional. However, it is important to note that the practice of bride-price is not universal and not all societies practice the payment of bride-price. Other societies like Indians follow a diametric opposite of bride-price in form of dowry (Bourdillon, 1997). Then, in the United States of America (USA) there is neither practice of bride-price nor dowry. Americans simply marry and establish families (Siwani, 2007).

Bride-price in Zambian tradition is typically a payment that the bridegroom's family pay to the bride's family in order to validate the marriage. Traditionally, bride-price may consist of monetary forms and payment in kind such as animals like cattle and goats (Mbaye and Wagner, 2013). In Zambia, the payment of bride-price is made to legalize the marriage and any marriage that does not involve the payment of bride-price is considered like casual sex or prostitution. Chondoka (1998) wrote that one of the steps for a marriage to be valid is if the man has paid some form of dowry (*lobola*) to the family of the woman.

Bride-price among other cultural practices in Zambian traditional societies has been civically considered to be one of the most important factors that solidifies the marriage bond and to be a progressive cultural practice. Nevertheless, in modern Zambia, some traditions such as women cleansing, genital mutilation and child marriages have been considered to be barbaric and are associated to be among the factors that promote gender-based violence or domestic violence, inferiority, divorces, and other vices that are tantamount to marital instability (Nava, *et al*, 2015). Women have been affected the most by such acts. This is the reason of late, across Zambian societies, with the coming of gender activists and other human rights activists, people have witnessed the removal or calls for an end to some of the cultural practices that have been considered to be detrimental and retrogressive to the institution of marriage (Anti-Gender-Based Violence Act, Sec. 2, 3). United State, State Department (2016) observed in the human rights country report that the harmful practices against widows such as sexual cleansing is prohibited and the practice of sexual cleansing has significantly declined in Zambia. However, the tradition of bride-price has continues to gain momentum as a civic practice in contemporary Zambia.

The practice of bride-price is there among the Mambwe people of Mbala District, just as it is in other ethnic groupings in other parts of Zambia, but no study has been conducted to specifically understand how the Mambwe go about this civic practice. Moreover, there is no known study which provides a proper understanding of this civic issue specifically on the Mambwe people especially in terms of its nature and scope. Hence, it was from this background that this study sought to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District from a civic perspective. This was done by investigating the significance, the changing trends and the implications of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province. The aspect of 'bride-price' was specifically perceived through civic lenses.

1.3 Problem Statement

It is a common belief that worldwide, some traditional practices hold marriages together while others are detrimental and harmful to the institution of marriage. Among the detrimental traditional practices are; women cleansing, child marriages and genital mutilation to mention only a few. These have mostly been condemned and abolished in order to minimize the negative effects on people (US, State Department, 2016). Prominent among those traditional practices which are

civically considered to be positive especially concerning the aspect of holding marriages together is pride-price (Nova, et al., 2015). It is for this reason that this traditional practice is one of the oldest and has continued to gain more and more prominence in modern societies. The traditional practice of bride-price is evident among the Mambwe of Mbala District and has been as such for years. However, despite the prominence of bride-price among the Mambwe, there is no known scholarly study which has sought to enhance a proper understanding or comprehension in terms of nature and scope of this civic practice. It is due to the aforementioned that this study sought to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District of Northern Province in order to enhance a proper academic and civic understanding of this civic practice.

1.4 General Research Objective

To investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province from a civic perspective.

1.4.1 Specific Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District.
2. To investigate the significance of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District.
3. To explore the changing trends in bride-pricing among the Mambwe people of Mbala District.
4. To describe the implications of bride-pricing on the institution of marriage among the Mambwe people of Mbala District.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District?
2. What is the significance of paying bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District?

3. What are the changing trends regarding bride-pricing among the Mambwe people of Mbala District over the years?
4. What are the implications of bride-pricing on institution of marriage among the Mambwe people of Mbala District?

1.6 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the study will contribute to the body of knowledge and literature specifically on matters relating to bride-price, its significance, changing trends, and implications on marriages among the Mambwe people. The findings may help to uncover salient aspects of bride-price vis-a-vis marriage among the Mambwe of Mbala District. The study findings may help inform policy makers by providing useful civic education information and knowledge on matters of bride-price among the Mambwe of Mbala District. Study findings may also raise awareness and knowledge on the central subject of bride-price and its effects on the institution of marriage particularly among the Mambwe of Mbala District.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

Delimitation is used to address how the study is narrowed and covering several factors over which the researcher does not have control at all (White, 2003). While acknowledging that there may be other traditional practices that could affect the institution of marriage either positively or negatively, the scope of this study was narrowed to bride-price, in Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

Limitations of the study simply mean the challenges the researcher faces when undertaking a study (Kombo and Tromp, 2014). Owing to the fact that bride-price is being practiced among all the tribes in Zambia, it was difficult for the researcher to target the whole country due to scarce resources because research is expensive. Hence, the study was limited and confined to one district. Therefore, its results would not be generalized to all districts in Northern Province and Zambia at large. The limitation, therefore, was that the sample of one district was small. Nevertheless, the findings would still be of great use in the study of bride-price.

Furthermore, primary data collection was another challenging phase in this study. According to Kombo (2014:100), “primary data is information gathered directly from the respondents”. The primary sources included semi structured interview guides, and in-depth focus group discussions. Thus, by the nature of the process, some respondents were hesitant in giving out information as the subject matter also touched on people’s feelings, values and emotions.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework implies a general set of assumptions about the nature of the phenomenon under study. According to Kombo and Tromp (2014) a theory is a reasoned statement or group of statements which are supported by evidence meant to explain phenomena. Consequently, theories are essential as they provide a generalized explanation to an occurrence. As such, researchers apply theories to guide their work and interpret the findings. So, looking at the nature of the study, the researcher adopted to use masculinity and feminist theoretical concepts. These two theoretical concepts are gendered inclined. Therefore, before looking at the two concepts, it is important in a preamble to conceptualize gender.

Gender

The gender model is made up of the structures, which include labour which is the sexual division of labour, power which is the overall subordination of women and dominance of men, and cathexis, the practices that shape and realize desire (Connell, 1995). Gender refers to the social differences between women and men. While often used synonymously with sex, in feminist theory, gender is considered a social construction, and thus, is distinguished from biological sex (Asiimwe, 2013). Gender allows researchers and the society to examine and understand how and why certain perceptions and actions held against men and women are incorporated not only in social but also in political and economic relations of society. This results from institutions, beliefs, practices, knowledge, relations or cultures that promote gender as a major basis of identity, that is, a social category imposed on a sexed body or a social organization of sexual differences (Asiimwe, 2013).

In other words, social characteristics being mistaken to be natural and biologically determined and translating into roles that are hinged on beliefs of dominant man and subordinate woman-hegemonic masculinities. Nikki (2009) distinguishes between sex and gender by asserting that sex refers to biological differences between males and females, and gender is the social and cultural

expectations and rules assigned to each sex as masculine and feminine roles. The concept of gender was important in the study of bride-price's nature and scope, significance, changing trends and complication, that was undertaken by the researcher in that bride-price is an activity that is socially contextualized, historically, culturally dependent and has been identified as a role of men. In short the paying of bride-price is a civic issue which is gendered in nature.

The Masculinity

Masculinity was developed by the Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell in the 1990s. Masculinity is the most influential consideration in the field of men and masculinities. Along with its enormous impact on the field of gender studies, it has also been taken up across a wide range of other disciplines (Nikki, 2009). Connell (1995:71) defines masculinity as, "... simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices on bodily experience, personality and culture." Masculinity does not exist except in contrast with femininity. Thus, it involves the socially constructed characteristics of men or what is expected of men especially in relation to women. The characteristics are socially constructed and differ from community to community and are not static as they keep on evolving as society undergoes change (Connell, 1995).

In several African societies characterized by patriarchal arrangements, men are expected to be strong, intelligent, and dominant (especially over women) in that those who fall below those standards and behaviors may be labeled as not being 'man' enough. These beliefs influence how society is organized and how different activities and practices are done (Asimwe, 2013). Masculinities believe that the behaviors, languages and practices, exist in specific cultural and organizational locations which are commonly associated with males and thus culturally defined. According to Connell (1995) notions of masculinities determine the type of behavior one is expected to exhibit in society if he is to be considered masculine. The conceptions of masculinity in most cases benefit men at the expense of women.

The Feminist

Feminism is a movement that was developed in the 1960s as a way of promoting women's well-being in societies as a result of various forms of mistreatment of women. It encompasses a set of ideas in a variety of disciplines as a result of the feminist movement, focuses on women's issues

and the liberation of women from positions of disadvantage within various social, political, and economic systems (Ropers-Huilman, 2003). The feminist concept is wide spread but mainly puts emphasis on three important issues as pointed out by Ropers-Huilman, (2003), (1) a woman has something valuable to contribute to every aspect of the world, (2) as an oppressed group women have been unable to achieve their potential, receive rewards or gain full participation in society, and (3) feminist research should do more than critique but should work towards social transformation. Societal-cultural oppression is the social norms, rituals, language, music, and art that reflect and reinforce the belief that one social group is superior to another.

1.9.1 Relation of the Theory to this Study

The concept of masculinity was used to analyze the perceptions and dynamics of bride-price in the research. For example, it helped in investigating whether how much one pays in bride-price determines or is determined by his feelings of “manliness”, and if the amount paid increases his dominance over the wife hence contributing to dominant masculinity. These kinds of questions helped in analyzing how issues of masculinity shape or are shaped by bride-price payment and its support (or critique) especially by men. This theory was important in the study because it enabled the researcher find out if the payment of bride-price affects how men play out their masculinities in the household and to some extent, how women feel feminine, which may trigger positive or negative effects.

In summary, “The masculine and feminine” signify a range of culturally defined characteristics assignable to both men and women. Masculinity and femininity, as characteristics of men and women, exist only as socio-cultural constructions and not as the property of persons. Indeed, they are no more than a set of assumptions which people hold about each other and themselves in certain contexts. As observed by Hooks (2000) that feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. Hooks analysis of feminism in relation to the payment of bride-price implies that women may be oppressed sexually or exploited because someone paid for them and at the same time men are being exploited by paying for a woman. Hence, the researcher thought it was imperative to use this theory as a guide to the study because bride-price is socially, culturally, contextually, historically identified as a role of men.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

A concept is an abstract or general idea inferred or derived from specific instances (Smith, 2004). A concept is a word or phrase that symbolizes several interrelated ideas. Unlike a theory, a concept does not need to be discussed to be understood. Basing on the objectives of this study, the researcher came up with a framework which guided in developing questions to assist in interviews and in eliciting data from participants. This study mainly aimed at establishing the nature and scope of bride-price on the Mambwe tribe and this was achieved through investigating the significance, changing trends and implications of bride price. Bride-price as a custom is a societal issue and a traditional practice on which people may express different views and perceptions over its nature and scope. The conceptual framework is as shown below:

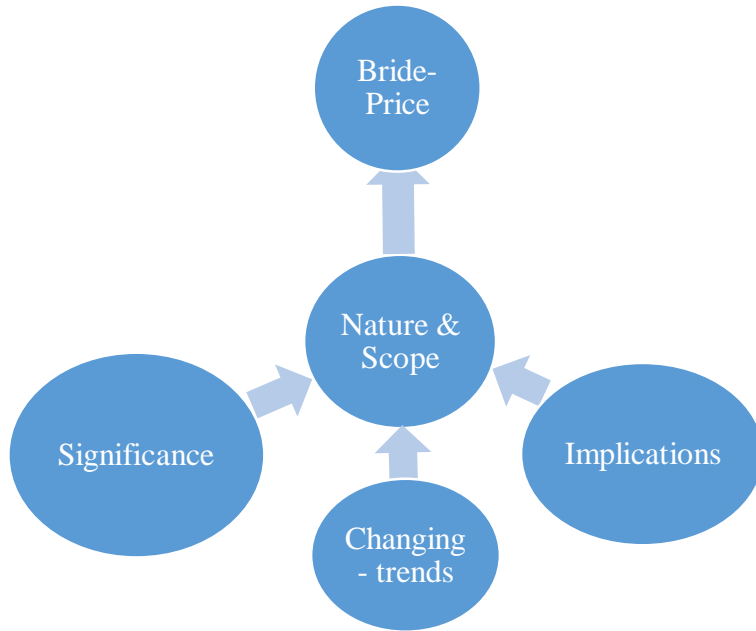


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

1.11 Operational Definitions of terms

Bride-price (*Lobola*): Also known as **bride wealth**. A transfer of a substantial consideration in the form of goods, livestock, or money from the groom or his relatives to the kinsmen of the bride (Nava et al, 2015). In this study, **bride-price (*impango*)** is used to refer to payment made in kind, cash or material by a groom or his family to the family of the bride in order to make marriage legitimate.

Femininity: Also called **womanliness** or **girlishness**, is a set of attributes, behaviours, and roles generally associated with women and girls (Sarah, 2012).

Masculinity: Also called **manhood** or **manliness**, is a set of attributes behaviours, and roles associated with men and boys (Connell, 1995).

Nature: The essential characteristics of a thing, the basic inherent feature or qualities (Williams, 1983). For the purpose of this current study only, nature is considered to be the basic or inherent features, character or qualities of bride-price.

Scope: The extent of the area or subject matter that something deals with or to which it is relevant (Williams, 1983). For the purpose of this current study, scope refers to the extent of bride-price in relation to what bride-price deals with, or the area in which bride-price is relevant.

1.12 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the research objectives, and research questions, significance of the study, delimitation and limitations of the study, theoretical frame-work and conceptual frame-works. The chapter also presented the operational definitions of terms. The next chapter provides the review of the literature related to the topic for the purpose of identifying the gaps in the current knowledge; hence justifying the need for this particular study to be conducted.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter reviews and discusses various literature related to the study of bride-price. Related literature is that which is relevant to the problem, such as previous research investigating the same variables or similar question, references or studies of similar practice (White, 2003). Kombo and Tromp (2014:62) postulates that, “Literature means the works the researcher consulted in order to understand and investigate the problem”. As such, literature review essentially means an analysis [scrutiny] of the published books, journals, thesis and magazines which have bearing effects on the study one intends to investigate to better understand and analyse the existing problem and see how the proposed study fits in to fill the gap.

Hence, this part of the study focusses on literature that elucidates the nature and scope bride-price, its conceptualization, history and prevalence. The chapter, as well reviews literatures with reference to a few studies that have been done across Africa. The chapter, further looks at the significance, changing trends and implications of bride-price.

2.2 Nature and Scope of Bride-Price

2.2.1 Understanding the Concept of Bride-Price

A lot of scholars and writers have propounded and conceptualized the practice of bride-price as a custom that is followed in most societies. Oguli Oumo (2004) considers bride-price to be a contract where material items (often cattle or other animals) or money are paid by the groom to the bride’s family in exchange for the bride, her labour and her capacity to produce children. Anyebe as cited in Sembe *et al* (2013) analyses the concept of bride-price and expatiates that bride-price (bride-wealth) makes marriage legal and establishes the legitimacy of children. It is compensation for loss to the woman’s family of one of its members, a potential child bearer. Bride-price is described in some Asian societies as compensation for the expense, care and trouble spent on the bride’s upbringing (Goody and Stanley, 1973).

Scholars like Sembe, (2013) conceptualizes bride-price as compensation for the complete loss of a worker as a bride withdraws from her own kindred and henceforth belongs to the husband. Rakhimdinova (2005) defines bride-price as the amount of money or property or wealth paid by the groom or his family to the parents of the woman upon marriage of their daughter to the groom. The agreed bride price is generally intended to reflect the perceived value of the girl or young woman. Bride-price is also considered to be an act that involves payment in cash or property by husband and his family to the bride's family, and is symbolic of friendship but in actual fact it is the transfer of productive and reproductive service to the man's family (Kaye, *et al*, 2005). Consequently, this researcher analyses the definitions of the concept of bride-price from this paragraph in three ways: (1) a woman is paid in exchange for her labour and value, (2) a woman is paid as compensation for her parent's loss, and (3) a woman is paid for the purpose of bearing children. Hence, it was important to do a study on the Mambwe people, in order to know how they conceptualize the practice of bride-price in relation to its nature and scope, its significance and implications.

Further, other scholars conceptualized bride-price in form of being a mere tradition or custom. Bride-price is the amount of money, property or any other form of wealth that the groom (man) and his family pays to the bride's (woman) family before marriage takes place (Fuseini, 2013). Bride-price may also be defined as the payment made in kind, cash or material as demanded by custom of a group by a groom or his family to the family of a bride in order to make the union legitimate (Falana, 2019). Generally, one can say that bride-price is the first and compulsory payment either cash or in kind, a man pays the parents of a girl or lady he intends to marry in order to have rightful ownership of the woman. Traditionally, it makes marriage to be legal as bearing of children outside wedlock is a taboo in African societies (Hague and Thiara, 2009). From the foregoing definitions, this researcher deduces that bride-price is conceptualized or considered as a significant custom or a belief that determines the legality of any marriage in societies where it is followed and practiced. That is why it was deemed important to undertake a study on the Mambwe people of Northern Province in order to investigate their civic views on the nature and scope of bride-price.

Raddliffe-Brown (1997) conceptualizes bride-price as the situation where payment of goods and services is made by the bridegroom to the brides' kin as an essential part of the establishment of the legality of the marriage. This definition is in tandem with Alkiga (1939) as cited by Sembe *et al.*, (2013) that bride price is an expression of intent to make exchange, to impose a cash payment of bride-wealth. The two aforementioned definitions from the two scholars point to two significant scenarios, first, bride price as a 'token of appreciation' on the part of a man, and second as a way of 'earning wealth' on the part of the bride's family. Therefore, there was need to particularly carry out a study on the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province and investigate the nature and scope as well as investigate the significance, changing trends and implication of bride-price as a civic practice.

2.2.2 History, Prevalence and the Practice of Bride-Price

Most societies, at some point in their history, have been characterized by payments at the time of marriage. Such payments typically go hand-in-hand with marriages arranged by the parents of the respective spouses. These marriage payments come in various forms and sizes but can be classified in two broad categories; transfers from the family of the bride to that of the groom, broadly termed as "dowry," or from the groom's side to the bride's, broadly termed as "bride-price." Bride-price occurs in two-thirds of societies as recorded by Murdock' in Siwani (2007).

The history of bride-price is a long one and can be traced back to the Egyptian civilization of around 3000 BCE. Other societies such as the Hebrews, Aztecs and the Incas also are attached to the long history of bride-price. From around 2000 BCE, the Germanic society ruled Western Europe from the 600 to 1000 BCE and used bride-price as a way of validating or legalized marriage (Quale, 1988). Historically, Islamic law required a form of bride-price for the marriage to be validated (Hague and Thiara 2009). The bride-price transactions during that time were associated with the Maghreb of the early Middle Ages, Bedouin tribes of the Middle East, and countries previously under the Ottoman Empire such as Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Iran, Albania, and Afghanistan (Rapoport, 2000).

In the Asian continent countries like Burma and Indonesia practiced bride-price for a long time. China required the negotiation of a bride price for the validity of marriage, and these transfers continue to be the norm in many rural areas today (Grossbard-Shechtman, 1993). China also seems

to be one of the few examples where bride price and dowry coexist, with the bride price being compulsory and the dowry, which is more voluntary in nature, typically financed with a return portion of the bride price (Engel, 1984). Taiwan also seems to follow this traditional Chinese practice of exchanging marriage payments in both directions (Parish and Willis, 1993). Bride price has continued to be prevalent in the rural areas of China, but it is rare in urban Chinese environments. The majority of urban marriages in Thailand seem to make monetary transfers. It also remains prevalent in the major cities of Syria, Iraqi and Iran. However, some studies reveal that there is some reduction in the practice of bride-price in Turkey (Forkuor, *et al*, 2018).

In Thailand bride-price varies ranging from nothing, if the woman is divorced, has a child fathered by another man, or is widely known to have had premarital relations with men to tens of millions of Thai baht for a woman of high social standing, a beauty queen, or a highly educated woman (Anderson, 2007). The bride price in Thailand is paid at the engagement ceremony and consists of three elements; cash, Thai (96.5 percent pure) gold, and the more recent Western tradition of a diamond ring. The most commonly stated rationale for the bride price in Thailand is that it allows the groom to demonstrate that he has enough financial resources to support the bride (and possibly her family) after the wedding. In many cases, especially when the amount is large, the parents of a Thai bride will return all or part of the bride-price to the couple in the form of a wedding gift following the engagement ceremony (Anderson, 2007).

In parts of Africa, a traditional marriage ceremony depends on payment of a bride price to be valid. In sub-Saharan Africa bride-price must be paid first in order for the couple to get permission to marry in church or in other civil ceremonies or the marriage is not considered valid by the bride's family (Mvududu, 2002). The amount can vary from a token to a great sum, real estate and other values. *Lobola* or *Lobolo* (sometimes also known as *Roora*) is the same tradition in most cultures in Southern Africa Shona, Venda, Zulu, and Ndebele among others (Siwani, 2007). The amount includes a few to several herd of cattle, goats and a sum of money depending on the family (Oguli, and Oumo 2004). The cattle and goats constitute an integral part of the traditional marriage for ceremonial purposes during and after the original marriage ceremony. Its custom connects families for lifetime and women are proud on the extremely high value they receive, comparing to the Baganda or the Rwandese. It is not rare, that the groom has to give his bride huge amounts of cattle

and also a house, car and other property. Of course depending on the "value" of the bride (schooling, degrees) but also on his own possibilities (Mvududu, 2002).

The beads and money are not always paid all at once. Depending on the wealth of the groom he and his family can enter into a non-written contract with the bride's family similar to the Jewish Ketubah, in which he promises to pay what he owes within a specified period of time (Hague and Thiara 2009). This is done to allow young men who do not have much to marry while they work towards paying off the bride price as well as raising a family or wait for their own sisters and aunts to get married so they in turn can use the amounts received to offset their debts to their in-laws. This amount must be paid by his family in the event he is incapacitated or dies. It is considered a family debt of honour (Forkuor, *et al*, 2018).

Moreover, the practice of paying bride price at the time of marriage is a custom that is widespread throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Studies have shown that bride price is mostly prevalent in African societies; more than 90 percent of sub-Saharan societies traditionally make such marriage payments (Murdock, 1967; Goody, 1973). Bride-price has been reported in countries that include, Nigeria, Ghana, Egypt, Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana and South Africa among other African countries (Oguli and Oumo. 2004).

The foregoing literature on the prevalence and history of bride-price was imperative to this study because it acted as an eye opener to the researcher. However, the researcher observed that the writers of this world history and prevalence of bride-price did not pay particular attention to the civic understanding of the nature and scope, significance, changing trends and implications of bride-price among particular tribes. This was the reason why this study was undertaken so as to investigate the nature and scope, significance, changing trends and implications of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province.

A study by Mubaiwa Otis conducted in Zimbabwe on the dynamics of bride-price in Zimbabwe and the diaspora in 2019 revealed that bride-price, which is called *Roora (bride-pride)* in Shona or *Lobola* (bride-price) in Ndebele, has undergone a radical transformation in Zimbabwe. According to him, a number of studies have been done in Zimbabwe on *lobola* but they have mainly focused on how this practice is conducted and the cultural significance attached to it (Chigwedere, 1982; Bourdillon, 1982 and 1993). For example, the work of Mvududu (2002),

Kambarami (2006), and Chireshe and Chireshe (2010) focused on the effects of bride-price in general without exploring its effects in its contemporary commercialised form. However, it is clear that bride-price has assumed some new characteristics over recent years that need to be analysed to appreciate how the practice affects women today (Chigwedere, 1982).

The approved bride-price is commonly calculated to mirror the distinguished worth of the girl or young woman. In Alupo's view the amount comprises payment in cash or property by husband and his family to the bride's family. It epitomises friendship but in actual fact it is the transfer of productive and reproductive service to the man's family, (Alupo, 2004). Similarly, to Meekers (1992) bride-price, "common in South African marriages, epitomises the transfer of the right of the girl's sexual and economic services to the husband". Wegh (2003) theorised bride price in line with Meekers perspective. To him, bride-price implies the act of obtaining progressively and collection of an article a component of saving". To Alupo (2004:35) bride-price "is a representation aimed at exchanging, to enforce a cash sum of bride-Price".

Anyebe (1985) in his analysis of bride-price explains that bride-price (bride-wealth) makes marriage lawful and authenticates the legitimacy of children. Furthermore, it is a reimbursement for loss to the woman's family of one of its members, a potential child bearer, it is marriage insurance to stabilize relationship and safeguard the wife.

Although bride-price payment is practised and cherished in the whole of Zimbabwe, it tends to be more expensive among the Shona group in Mashonaland and particularly so among the Vakaranga in Masvingo and the Manyika in Mutare (Chigwedere, 1982). This is contributed to by the fact that these regions believe that they are the most educated in the country. As such, the study includes those groups and compares their perceptions with other tribal groups. The underlying reasons for the continuation of bride-price were explored through a critical intersectional analysis which considered if and how constructs such as masculinity, gender, class, and modernisation all feed into the impact upon people's attitudes and support of bride-price.

Mubaiwa's study findings were that in earlier times, the purpose of bride-price in many African countries, particularly in Zimbabwe was to validate marriages and to safeguard women against mistreatment. Furthermore, it was used to stabilize relationships and to merge the two families. At present, bride-price has become so highly commercialised that in numerous cases it has lost its

traditional value. In many countries, Zimbabwe included, the norm has thus, changed especially in the urban areas where money or goods are used as a method of payment rather than livestock. However, the situation is slightly different in the rural areas (though this varies according to ethnic and tribal groups) where a more traditional bride-price custom remains common and is still acceptable as the norm. The studies by Mubaiwa as well as by Alupo provided insight on how bride-price has been used to perpetuate gender upheavals without paying attention to the nature and scope of it, and the above studies were not conducted in Zambia. Therefore, it was imperative to conduct a study in Zambia with specific reference to the nature and scope of bride-price.

Another study conducted by Sambulo Ndlovu and Tendai Mangena on the implications and complications of bride-price payment among the Shona and Ndebele of Zimbabwe in 2013 revealed that paying of bride-price for both the Shona and the Ndebele had both positive and negative effects. The institution of bride-price was a noble thing for both the Shona and the Ndebele. It was the first step in the formation of every family and was a cultural requirement for the establishment of every family. The two researchers took the position that despite the cultural significance of the practice, there were elements that they felt were no longer compatible in the new world. Not to say that the tradition embraces everything that modernity means to Africans, but it is a way of demonstrating that some of the traditional customs have been corrupted (Sambulo and Tendai, 2013). The two researchers also argued that the paying of bride-price is one of the ways in which patriarchy asserts its power over women in many respects. In most cases, men are in control of the proceedings. This control is a vital feature of gender relations in patriarchies.

Sambulo and Tendai (2013) are in tandem with Alupo (2004) who also observed that there have been radical changes in the life of both the Shona and the Ndebele over the past many years. Thus, it would not be proper to assume that what was permissible those hundred years or so back still obtains today. Mainly the changes witnessed were due to external influences. These changes can be seen in a number of respects. The communal nature of the payment of bride-price obtained before our society transformed into a capitalist one. When the communities became capitalist, an individualistic outlook slowly replaced the communal perspective.

In Zimbabwe, for both the Shona and the Ndebele, payment of bride-price is steeped in tradition. However, it disturbs the family concept whose basis it should be. The disturbance is mainly seen when bride-price payment condemns women to a kind of marital enslavement (Chireshe and Chreshe, 2010). The enslavement denies them control over decision-making processes, family resources, their children and their own sexuality. In some cases, it takes away the economic freedom they might have acquired through education especially in cases where the father demands compensation for educating the girl. According to Sambulo and Tendai,'s study, bride-price humiliates and dehumanizes women; then something ought to be done. Various options can be explored in an effort to curb the negative influence that the payment of bride-price has on the efforts to emancipate women.

Correspondingly, Ansell's (2001) findings among the Basotho of Lesotho and the Shona of Zimbabwe also establish that bride-price is being commercialised and that young people are hotly contesting the practice as financial transaction that disadvantages women. It is argued that now people are transforming bride-price into a profit making venture to become rich, which is an abuse of the practice that leads to women oppression. It is now a means to access wealth, as one proverb says, 'To bear a daughter is to ensure future wealth' as Dekker and Hoogeveen (2002) put it. Similarly, Gwiza (2015) also observed that society has abused the practice of bride-price by turning it into an enterprise by capitalising on their daughters demanding huge amounts of money and properties. Matope, *et al* (2013) in their study in Zimbabwe established that commercialised bride-price exacerbates domestic violence that results in men using it as a tool to oppress, exploit and dominate women including perpetrating gender based violence.

Based on the findings from the studies conducted by Sambulo Ndlovu and Tendai Mangena among the Shona and Ndebele of Zimbabwe in 2013 and also studies by Mubaiwa Otis on the dynamics of bride-price in Zimbabwe and the diaspora in 2019, Ansel in 2001 and Gwiza 2015, it can be deduced that bride-price is a complex issue. It is a tradition, it validates marriages and at the same time it promotes gender based violence against women, the nature also varies ranging from materials to money. Meaning that bride-price has both positive and negative effects among the Shona and Ndebele marriages. However, Zimbabwean studies focused mainly on how bride-price is abused in society and not on its proper nature and scope. Moreover, no study has been done to ascertain this scenario among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern

Province. The literature above, also did not take into account the civic perspective of bride-price as a way of enhancing its proper academic understanding. That was why this study was imperative because it indented to enhance civic understanding of the nature and scope of bride-price with respect to its significance, changing trends and implications.

In 2013, Assimwe Henry from Uganda, conducted a study on the Changing Dynamics, Trends and Perceptions in the Bride-Price Custom in Uganda and the Implications, a Feminist Perspective. His, was a case study which was done among the Banyakitra ethnic group of western Uganda. He stated that the rationale for carrying out a study was necessitated by the fact that, despite Uganda's strides towards modernisation and the subsequent decline of several customs and practices, the bride-price custom, an age old practice has instead continued to gain more prominence in terms of the attention given to it and the amount of resources exchanged during the practice. He pointed out that some activists have blamed it for having changed from just a procedure to solemnise marriages to a highly commercialised and expensive transaction (Byamukama, 2011).

Thiara and Hague (2011) also disclose that in Uganda there is extensive debate between women's rights activists and other actors as to whether bride-price has genuine positive outcomes or whether it is a dehumanising tool that reduces women to purchasable commodities and thus lowering their position, decision making powers, and other negative outcomes in marital relations. The debate continues with less signs of consensus amidst limited documented facts. Despite the debates and perceptions, a large percentage of the population still support the practice. Hence, Assimwe conducted a study to analyse the experiences and perceptions of people about bride-price grounding itself on the notions of gender, masculinity, class, modernisation or modernity and their intersectionality.

From the discussion, Assimwe noted that bride-price has overwhelming support among the population for reasons associated with recognising the marriage and as a form of appreciation. This was also reaffirmed by Alupo (2004) that the payment of bride-price is more prevalent among the Baganda people of Uganda as a form of recognition or an appreciation of the effort of the parents for looking after the bride. The financial incentive to the parents also makes it popular. But most importantly, it helps men to fulfil their need for the feelings of manhood and reinforcing their hegemonic masculinities, since payment in some way gives them more power over women.

Majority of women have been socialised to believe that payment earns them respect among peers and parents so non-payment would deprive them certain advantages. As noted, issues ranging from who controls property, the discourse used in ceremonies, the symbolic meanings all work to reinforce the gender roles and stereotypes (MIFUMI, 2004).

According to Assimwe (2013) bride-price is also a class affair as some people especially the educated middle class always want it in order to reinforce and conform to their class expectations and peer influence while for the poor, there is some evidence that attention to it is less compared to the rich, partly due to affordability problems. With modernisation and modernity gradually setting in, even bride price has undergone modifications to conform to the needs and practices of modern life, but this has made it so expensive to the extent that many accuse it of having gone commercial at the expense of the 'original' social meanings, that is, solemnising the marriage without economic incentives. Byamukama (2011) also supports that in Uganda bride-price has been commercialised. In addition, like any other family matter, bride price that was hitherto regarded as a private sphere has come out to be a public affair as modernisation trends set in. This public exposure is partly responsible for the current debates as in the past; it was hardly a debatable subject (MIFUMI, 2004).

Asiimwe's study findings were that bride-price has both negative and positive implications with regards to men's and women's welfare. To start with the positive findings; bride-price function is performed to formalize and solemnise the marriage before the spouses can be recognized as husband and wife. According to Thiara and Hague (2011) bride-price is used as basis to validate customary marriages in African countries. It is paid by the groom's family to the bride's family. It also serves as a contract between the two families. Material gifts exchanged range from livestock and other animals and cash especially in rural areas. In Urban areas where land for grazing livestock may not be available, cash or physical assets like furniture, machinery, electronics and other household items are instead exchanged. A similar study conducted in Uganda by Alupo in 2004 also found that among the Kiga bride-price serves to remind the brides' family of her presence. The cattle, goods and material gifts remain in her relative's home as a symbol of her presence through the goods and services from her husband. Bride-price also serves as a marriage insurance and stabilizer and reminder that the wife is not something cheap or insignificant. These gifts and services continue to come to their people after she is married.

Other reasons given in support of bride-price include increased respect for men and women, and their parents. It is argued that when a woman is paid for then everyone in the community will know that somebody's daughter has been officially given away and this gives respect not only to her but also the parents image in the community improves. The same was echoed by Baluku *et al* (2012:2) in their study of bride and domestic violence in western Uganda, who concluded that bride-price payment, makes a "woman feel safe, secure, stable respected and loved". Among the Iteso people and other societies such as the Lango, payment is more understood as a recognition of the wife's value both to her husband and to her own relatives. In addition, the wife's contribution to the family's subsistence is normally indispensable and so the husband is as much dependent upon her as she is on him (Baluku *et al*, 2012).

On the other hand, Asiimwe's paper argues that while bride-price has overwhelming support among the members of the community, its motivations, processes and outcomes are gendered and bent towards reinforcing masculinities and femininities that do not only create, but also reinforce male dominance and female subordination thus expanding gender inequality, reduced decision making powers for women in the households and sometimes wife abuse. This argument is in conformity with Alupo's (2004) findings that, by paying bride-price the man becomes the sole claimant to the wife's sexual favours. However, the husband remains free to indulge in extra marital sexual relationships subject to certain penalties charged by the husbands or fathers of the other women caught doing the same. Therefore, bride-price payment entitles them to the wife's sexual favours whenever they feel like. The right over the girl is transferred from her father to the husband and his family. Before bride-price is paid the girl is under her father and his sons' control (Grey, 2009).

Asiimwe's paper also argues that with forces of modernisation coupled with the desire for actors to conform to particular class status, the practice has turned too commercialised, lost its original meaning, and makes women appear like purchased commodities. Grey (2009:34) notes that,

Accordingly this may be misrepresentation of the African social practices since it only emphasises the economic functions of bride-price and ignores other important social purposes, and as such, it encourages the layman to think that "price" used in this context is synonymous with "purchase" in

common English parlance. Hence we find people believing that wives are bought and sold in Africa in much the same manner as commodities are bought and sold in European markets.

The prohibitive costs have denied several young men and women a chance to marry. Banyamukama in his study also noted that, although bride-price payment is practised and cherished in the whole of Uganda, it tends to be more expensive among the Banyakitara group in western in Uganda particularly among the Banyankore and Bakiga (Byamukama 2011).

Besides that, bride-price has lost its original nature and has subsequently acquired undersigned qualities. Mistaken bride-price is now more than ever “the price of a woman” (Alupo, 2004). The substitution of money payments for livestock has disrupted the network of reciprocal obligations that formerly linked families together and consolidated marriages. Some of the parents now see Bride-price as an opportunity to extract a lot of cash from a hard pressed suitor. It is therefore important to note that bride-price has lost its former positive functions. It is no longer an efficient method of establishing the validity of a marriage but a mechanism for controlling the distribution of women (Kaye *et al*, 2005).

Further, Asimwe found that the love for bride-price has implications for girls’ education since some parents force them off school to get married in order to get money in form of bride-price. The fact that in most communities, bride-price can be claimed back in case of marriage failure, may compel women to stay in abusive relationships as their parents may not be in a position to repay the money (Thiara and Hague 2011).

From the Ugandan literature reviewed, the context of bride-price is a wide and complex one having both negative and positive implications with its cultural rooted significance. Further, the literature from the Ugandan studies helped this current study because it touched on the trends, perceptions and implications of bride-price. This made Ugandan studies similar to the current study. However, the above studies did not look at the civic understanding of the bride-price. Besides, the Ugandan scenario may be different from that of Zambia. The above Ugandan studies also focused on issues related to dynamism associated with bride-price and not the nature and scope of it. As such, the current study is imperative but also different because it was conducted in Zambia’ Mbala District, a unique location but, more so, because it was conducted on the Mambwe tribal grouping.

In 2015, Dery Isaac conducted a study on bride-price and domestic violence. This Ghanaian study explored the link between the practice of bride-price and domestic violence in Nandom District, Ghana. Bride-price is used to cement and validate marriages in many sub-Saharan African countries including Ghana. Dery cited Hague *et al* (2011) that bride-price as a repugnant cultural practice has been at the centre of many international debates and discussions and has received condemnation globally. Despite the international calls for its abolishment and Ghana being a signatory to most of the international human rights conventions, the practice is still prevalent in Ghana especially among the *Dagabas* of Nandom District where patriarchy and patrilineal family systems are strongly upheld. There has been growing recognition that in urban areas of Ghana and among the matrilineal families in southern Ghana, the practice of bride-price is fast changing as goods and money rather than animals are more commonly given in the form of non-refundable gifts to the bride's family.

However, in rural communities in Northern Ghana including the Nandom District, traditional bride-price practices remain entrenched and are extremely common and tend to be accepted as the cultural norm albeit the practice varies considerably by tradition, and culture of various ethnic group (Bishai *et al.*, 2009). Evidence suggests that the tradition of bride-price historically is believed to have beneficial consequences. It gives formal recognition to marriages, maintains social control, aids in the construction of societal identity, protects wives against possible abuse, stabilizes the partnership, promotes social cohesion and joins the two families together (Ansell, 2001; Muthegheki *et al.*, 2012).

The findings from Dery's (2015) qualitative enquiry which he conducted revealed that the practice is deeply entrenched in time tested history and has widely been accepted by both male and female participants. His study revealed that bride-price is a deep-rooted cultural practice with almost all participants supporting its continuity. Although bride-price was reported to have many beneficial consequences hence the need to preserve it, there was also acknowledgement of its negative consequences on men, women and children in the Nandom District. This finding lends credence to other studies (Kaye *et al.*, 2005; Wakabi, 2002; Fuseini, 2013).

On the other hand, it was strange to find that bride-price amount does not vary according to the lady's level of education as reported in other studies elsewhere. For example, in Ashraf *et al's*. (2014) study, a major finding was that participants thought there was a strong connection between bride-price payment and domestic violence and this was a recurring theme from both male and female participants. However, this connection was said to be complex and not straight forward. While findings from this enquiry do not suggest that payment of bride-price is the root of gender inequality and domestic violence, they indicate its importance as a key contextual factor for gender inequality and domestic violence in the study area. Analysis of this study on bride-price as a contextual factor for domestic violence supports Levinson (1989) study on male dominance, use of violence in conflict resolution, and gender economic inequalities in familial relationship.

Combating domestic violence, therefore, requires a multi-faceted struggle of which reform of bride-price could be eminent. Findings from this study indicate that bride-price will take long to change from the current trends of commercialization because majority of people see it as acquisitive and part of their lives since they earn from the practice. Participants in the study overwhelmingly recommended that the practice of bride-price should be changed. Community awareness raising and sensitization campaigns should be carried out to educate people on the importance of bride-price and its negative impacts on women's wellbeing and community development at large (Sambulo and Tendai, 2013).

The study conducted by Dery as well as by Fuseini and Doodoo from Ghana is important and related to the current study because both studies are on bride-price. However, it is imperative to take note that Dery's study paid much attention on the relationship that exists between bride-price and domestic violence and it was specifically carried out in Nandom District of Ghana. The current study on the other hand, focussed on investigating the nature and scope with respect to significance, changing trends and implication of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District of Zambia's Northern Province. From Dery, it is clear that bride-price can be used to fuel domestic violence against women. However, in Zambia and particularly among the Mambwe tribal group, such assertions may or may not be true because no specific study has been carried out to ascertain the assumptions. This was where this study became more important and unique.

2.3 Bride-Price in Zambia

In 2008, Chilufya conducted a study on consent and bride-price as two elements that help in determining the validity of a customary marriage and custodian of children among the Bemba people of Northern Zambia. He established that bride-price (lobola) is helpful in uniting the two parties and their extended families. He points out that without any payment to the bride's family, customary marriage is not valid or considered legitimate. Mtonga's (2007) study brings out some negative aspects of bride-price. He established that traditional practices like bride-price lead to men mistreating their wives because they feel they own them. He attaches maltreatment issues such as wives being beaten for not being submissive.

Equally, Martignoni (2002) establishes that, the fact that many women in Zambia are married under customary law, marriages are not valid unless bride-price is paid to the wife's family. His study further acknowledges increase in the payment of bride-price in recent years in Zambia and that the custom has been taken up in some tribal groups where bride-price was not traditionally a custom. He however, establishes that, bride price leads to women being treated as commodities and exposes them to psychological and physical violence by both the husband and in-laws (Martignoni, 2002).

Kamuwanga (2000) whose main focus was on learning how cultural practices and beliefs influence the spread of HIV and AIDS established bride-price as a value for a female among tribal grouping such as the Bemba, Lozi, Luvale, and Tonga. Thus they emphasise more on the bride not having children at the time of marriage. The Kaonde, Luvale and Ngoni view it as a legal right over a man. Every parent looks forward to earning something from their daughter when she grows up and marries. If bride-price is not paid, the marriage is not recognised by parents. Bride-price also brings respect and liberates the woman as she feels accepted by the groom's side. Every woman, whatever the age ought to be paid for when she gets married, though the price varies according to age and if one has had sex before. Bride-price tends to be high for a virgin. All cultural practices including sexual cleansing can only be performed if bride-price was paid (Kamuwanga, 2000).

In addition, Ashraff (2015) conducted a comparative study on bride-price and female education in Zambia and Indonesia. The findings revealed bride-price as potentially leading to ill-treatment of women. Ashraff found out that men use the commodification of bride-price as justification for the

abuse of women, which has an effect of lowering the status of women within marriage. Ashraff's findings further show that where bride price was practiced, increased investments in education by parents on their girl child led to an increase in the amount of bride-price received by parents at the time of marriage.

Kamuwanga's (2000) study similarly reveals that bride-price gives the male figure an upper hand over a woman's life to an extent that she has very little control over her sexuality and reproductive rights. The study further revealed that bride-price tends to place a woman in a position of property not a partner to her husband. A woman has limited power to decide when to have sex or whether to have safe or unsafe sex.

Further, Mulenga *et al* (2007) in their study on human rights violations in Zambia Part II on women's rights shows bride-price as being a pervasive and enduring feature which has been universalized by society and local courts. They found that customary marriages are not valid unless bride-price payment is made to the wife's family. That study also showed that where the bride price was paid, women were being treated as commodities being purchased.

This perception frequently exposed women to an increased risk of physical and psychological violence at the hands of their husbands and their family. They further observed that the practice transfers a woman's productive labour or protective capacity to her husband and his family; the reason why bride-price has to be returned in the event of a divorce. Their study further revealed that the issue of refunding the bride-price causes difficulties to the woman as she is often forced to stay in marriage just because her family is unable to return the bride-price or for fear of being castigated by her own family. In other instances, the payment of bride-price ties the woman to her husband's family even after the husband's death. The fact that the man or his family has parted with resources in order to acquire a wife, a woman has no power even beyond her husband's death (Mulenga *et al*, 2007).

Chuunga's (2015) study on African marriage revealed that among the seventy-three ethnic groups in Zambia, each tribe has its own way of determining dowry charges. He cited the Lamba tribe who would only ask for *insalamu* from the groom to show commitment. However, he was required to assist in any activity that helped to generate income like farming. Tonga people only demanded a minimum number of six cows which were distributed to the mother, the father, the uncle and her

counsellor at puberty or marriage. The remaining was shared with the wife's family. The sharing of bride-price was done to make it easy to refund bride-price to the groom's family in case of a problem or divorce. In this way, it was easy for the woman to leave an abusive marriage because money could be easily refunded. However, this is now getting diluted with the commercialisation of bride-price concept and intermarriages across different ethnic groups (Chuunga, 2005).

Another study in Zambia on bride-price was conducted by Muumbe Moono. The study was based on bride-price (lobola) and gender based violence. Moono's study investigated the influence of bride-price on gender based violence among married women in Lusaka's Kamanga compound. Specifically, Moono's study sought to examine how the price of bride-price is determined when negotiating for marriage; to establish how married women and men perceive bride-price in relation to gender based violence; and determine the types of gender based violence perceived to be mostly associated with the payment of bride-price in marriage.

Moono's findings on the determinants of the pricing of bride-price payment revealed a number of considerations including the ethnic background of both the bride and the groom, the bride's level of education, the need to meet costs associated to the girl's upbringing, the groom's status, and the virginity of a bride among others. The findings also showed the pricing of bride-price drifting to involve fundraising for kitchen parties for the bride as well as raising money to pay marriage counsellors (Moono, 2019).

On how married women and men perceived bride-price in relation to gender based violence, the findings suggested that paying bride-price translates into buying a wife and as such she becomes a husband's property. Bride-price gives the man powers to treat the wife as he wishes including subjecting her to sexual and other forms of abuse. It seems to take away a wife's rights to make decisions on matters affecting her own life including restricting her movements, what to wear and depriving her a claim over her children among others. The study revealed emotional, economic, sexual and physical violence as the common types of gender based violence that married women are subjected to as a result of bride-price (Moono, 2019).

From the findings of Moono's study, bride-price seems to influence gender based violence among married women. However, the connection between the two is more complex and not direct. More often, in cases of gender based violence where bride-price is mentioned, something else should

have gone wrong on perceived expectations of the roles of the wife resulting in conflict. At the back of it, it still stands that the wife was paid for, and hence ought to conform to the expectations of the husband within the institution of marriage. From the findings, it seems the more the charge for bride-price, the higher the chances for that woman being subjected to gender based violence, perpetrated by her husband and in-laws in an event of misunderstandings in that marriage. Bride-price thus disadvantages women in marriage to an extent that it worsens their already disadvantaged position in relation to men (Moono, 2019).

The reviewed literature was of help to the current study in that it helped the researcher to identify the gaps left by the others studies on bride-price in Zambia. Most studies done in Zambia such as Moono and Mulenga's studies did not directly focus on bride-price in relation to its nature and scope but rather focussed on gender based violence. Even the studies by Chuunga in 2015 and Chilufya in 2008 were based on bride-price and early marriages and human rights. These Zambian studies however did not address the area of civic awareness of the nature and scope of bride-price. Therefore, the motivation for this study was to provide a deeper understanding of the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province thus endeavouring to bridge the gap in knowledge that had not been addressed by Zambian researchers.

2.4 The Changing Trends of Bride-Price in Zambia

2.4.1 Bride-Price in Pre-Colonial Zambian Societies

Pre-colonial Zambia is the era before the establishment of the colonial state by the imperial (European) colonial powers. Prior to the arrival of the white settlers our society comprised of several groupings based on families, clans and tribes which were essentially agrarian, subsistent and with limited contacts to the outside world.

It is not easy to determine the exact origin of bride-price in Pre-Zambian societies but it is on record historically that the custom of bride-price has been in existence for time immemorial (Alice, 2014). All the tribes in Zambia consider bride-price as one of the most important determinant of valid marriage (Mizinga, 2000). In olden days, in the Zambian societies (tribes), marriage was a cultural institution that every man and woman was expected to respect. Taylor (2006:98) in his

book titled culture and customs of Zambia writes, “in some cultures, such as the Bemba, the marriage payment, bride wealth was insignificant in terms of worth but, rather, was intended as a token to declare the would-be groom’s intention to marry and to, in effect, start wedding negotiations.” The legalization of marriage was done through the payment of bride-price. A research by Kapambwe (2004) revealed that the payment for *ubwimashi* which is bride-price was fixed by the young woman's family, as the amount for *ichuuma chachisungu*, literally 'money for virginity'. This was the most important of all the marriage payments and was expected to be made before the preparations for *ubwinda* (wedding) commenced.

Starting up a new family in the olden days was communal in nature (Mangena and Ndlovu, 2013). As such, the bridegroom did not pay bride-price per se, but his family paid it to the bride’s family. Kapambwe (2004) observed that, *ubwimashi* which is given to the parents of the betrothed young woman, and distributed among the persons within their family group, and also to all those friends who contributed to the occasion, and were generally supportive. Therefore, this shows that traditionally, the bride-price was paid not to the herd of the girl’s family but to the family. This was also reaffirmed by Simonsen (2000:122) that, “The marriage payment is distributed between the mother and father, the mother shares her part with a brother who represents her agnates.” This was done so that everyone take a portion in the payments was for the family and not only for the mother and father alone. A central purpose of bride-price was to create an alliance between kinship groups (Dekker and Hooegeveen, 2002). Raising the bride-price was the responsibility of the groom’s extended lineage group, with the principle contributions coming from his father, grandfather, and father’s brothers, and with mother’s brothers making small contributions (Mizinga, 2000).

In those olden times, payments of bride-price were made in form of cows, goats, and a few bags of farm produce among other goods that were available or goods that were mostly prevalent in a particular area or tribal groups (Alice, 2014). Chondoka (1988) supported this when he wrote that in areas where cattle were traditionally kept, marriage payments were negotiated in cattle, while in other areas they were negotiated in terms of small valuable items such as iron tools, beads, grain, bark, cloth, animal skins, and money.

In cementing that payments of bride-price were made in kind, Simonsen (2000:122) in his study on the *cisungu* initiation ceremony of the Mambwe people noted that, “Marriage payments among the Mambwe is in the form of money and livestock such as chickens, goats and cattle.” In some tribes those men who had neither good nor animals to pay as bride-price were made to work in farms of the bride’s family as a substitute for the said payments. This was done because marriage was considered as a social-cultural issue and a sacred custom aiming at broadening the family of both a man and a woman. The study by Simonsen is cardinal as a body of knowledge in the academic circle, however, it was on Mambwe initiation ceremony and not on the nature and scope of bride-price. This made the current study a unique one and different from the one carried by Simonsen on the Mambwe people.

2.4.2 Bride-Price in Contemporary Zambia

The present Zambia was born in 1964 after getting independence from the British government. The present Zambia is subdivided into three republics namely, the first republic was a period from 1964 to 1972, and second republic from 1973 to 1990 and the third republic from 1991 to date.

The present Zambia has been characterized with a number of inter-marriages or cross cultural marriages, however, the tradition of bride-price has continued to take its course. The practice of bride-price has taken a new twist in the sense that the communal nature of the payment of bride-price existed before our society transformed into a capitalist one (Women and Law in Southern Africa Research Trust, 2002). When the communities became capitalist, an individualistic outlook slowly replaced the communal aspect. Eventually, this meant that the family was no longer obliged in any way to pay the bride-price on behalf of the marrying man. Meaning that the one marrying had to incur the payment of bride-price thereby making bride-price a burden on the part of the groom (Alice, 2014).

The transition of bride price as a custom from traditional to modernity has seen the change in payment systems from paying of animals and other goods to the paying of monetary forms. This tendency is common in most urban and peri-urban areas. Kapambwe (2004) writes that, Bemba marriage payments presently are in the form of cash but historically they comprised valuables and necessities. However, in some tribes and more especially in rural and remote areas of Zambia, the groom’s family are charged to pay in terms of cattle or goats then the amount is converted to

money (WLSART, 2002). The nature and amount of resources exchanged has also changed in modern Zambia. This has come with an increase in bride-pricing to exorbitant levels. Others have altogether done away with it due to changes in marriage and familial arrangements.

Taylor (2006:98) notes that, “though not the intention, the higher the value of the payment, the greater the risk that the bride is viewed as a commodity, and *de facto* ownership of her passes from father to husband.” In tandem, Fuseini (2013) in his studies conducted in Ghana disclosed that there is also debate on whether bride-price is driven by economic motives rather than social motives and whether the practice is relevant or detrimental to the social lives of women and men.

In the contemporary era, paying of bride-price has been commercialized based on the status of a woman. It has been observed that educated brides, more especially working class women, tend to be on the expensive side as compared to the non-working class and those who are not educated (WLSART, 2002). This is in line with May (1984:48) who stated from his findings in Zimbabwe that “Such a system is, of course, liable to abuse in an increasingly commercial society. Fathers demand unduly high amounts for educated daughters as a recompense for the money they have invested in educating their girls”. An educated girl attracts more money for two reasons; first, it is compensation for the money invested in her education and secondly, it is believed that she would be of more value to the husband than an uneducated one (Mangena and Ndlovu, 2013). This information on bride-price in contemporary Zambia does not give full details on the nature and scope of bride-price in Zambia, and particularly among the Mambwe people of Mbala District. Thus, it was necessary to carry out this study.

2.5 Significance of Bride-Price in Zambia

As alluded to from other reviewed literature above, bride-price plays a significant role of solidifying marriages among various tribes in Africa and Zambia at large. Chuunga (2015) explains that the practice legitimizes marriages and promotes the official wife and seals her status as wife and as a worthy woman. She may feel that she is worth something and is honoured and respected. When the bride-price is not paid, the woman’s stay at the husband's house is considered illegal and a woman is considered sometimes like a common house maid (Moono, 2019).

According to Kapambwe (2004), bride-price represents a symbol of appreciation to the wife's family. It is a recognition and partial compensation in that the woman is leaving her biological family and will no longer be able to contribute directly to that household. Through the practice, daughters' considerable and often painful loss is partially recognized. It is a token of what the bride's family have done for their daughter, her education, training, general upbringing etcetera. She is now leaving the parent's home; here is some compensation, (Fuseini, 2013).

Chilufya (2008) noted that bride-price is significant in the sense that it makes a woman sit in the marriage peacefully. It gives her value especially when one produce childrens. Therefore, at best, it can give daughters security in their marriages and their new homes. It can give pride to the woman and make her feel comfortable and important. It promotes the 'official' wife and seals her status as wife, as a worthy woman. It also cements the relationship between the bride's family and the groom's family (Chuunga, 2015).

The literature reviewed on the significance of bride-price above revealed that there has been generally a number of significance, ranging from solidifying marriages, as a way of respecting a bride to bride-price being a symbol of appreciation. The literature though did not specify whether appreciation during marriages should only be done to the part of woman alone, the literature has not also civically explained well how bride-price solidifies marriages. This study however, wished to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people.

2.6 The Implications of Bride-Price in Zambia

As observed earlier, implications can either be positive or negative. To start with, one of the positive implications of bride-price is that it shows respect among both families because it is traditionally accepted, (Nava *et al*, 2015). It is a purely symbolic gesture acknowledging that the groom respects the bride and her family. Moreover, it cements the marriage because it acts as a bond (Sembe *et al*, 2014).

On the negative side, Forkuor, *et al*, (2018) note that bride-price has led to the increase in domestic violence against women that include, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering and sexual abuse of female children in the household. Also Dery (2015) writes that bride-price is widely considered to be both a cause and a consequence of son preference.

The practice of bride-price inevitably leads to discrimination in different areas against daughters and makes them vulnerable to various forms of violence. This may lead to girls being unwanted, sex selective abortion, or their parents may abandon or mistreat them after they married.

Other implications of bride-price are that, it puts the new marriage couple in debts. Some grooms get loans to be paid back within many years just to marry the woman they love (Forkuor, *et al*, 2018). Again others are marrying in high age, as they still need almost a lifetime to acquire enough property to marry their wives officially. Falana (2019:133) from her studies conducted in Nigeria writes that, “In our modern society however, bride-price payment has become a very serious gender issue with implications on gender relations in different socio-cultural contexts and as such, it has brought about syndromes and dominance as the culprit to gender equality and equity in marriages.” Hence, paying bride-price as a means of compensation for educating a woman seems to be a very argumentative issue in the sense that parents educate their girl child because it is their responsibility and not as a means of doing business by charging an exorbitant bride-price as compared to the women who is not educated. Moreover, it is undisputable that parents do educate male children as well. The above literature focused on issues related to syndrome and dominance as well as commercialized associated with bride-price and not the nature and scope of it. This was one of the reasons that made this researcher to endeavour on carrying out a research on the Mambwe people in order to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price in relation to its implications.

2.7 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter looked at literature related to the nature and scope of bride-price. Examples were drawn from different countries, including Zambia. As highlighted earlier, the reviewed studies did not adequately address the nature and scope of bride-price among the people of Mbala District in northern Zambia. Therefore, the motivation for this study was to provide a deeper understanding on the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia’s Mbala District of Northern Province. Thus the study endeavoured to bridge the gap in knowledge that was not addressed by Zambian researchers.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The aim of this chapter is to give an outline of the methodology that was employed in carrying out the study. According to Wellington (2000: 22) a methodology is “the activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying the approaches you use in data collection”. The elements of this chapter are the; Research Approach, Research Design, Study Site, Target Population, Study Sample, Sampling Techniques, Data Collection Instruments, Data Collection Procedure, Data Analysis and Ethical Consideration.

3.2 Research Approach

Basically, there are three main research approaches namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed method. The researcher intends to do a qualitative based research, because qualitative research is particularly concerned with the way in which people understand and give meaning to their social world. Qualitative analysis asks such questions as; what kinds of things are going on here? What are the forms of this phenomenon? What variations are found in this phenomenon? That is, qualitative analysis is addressed to the task of delineating forms, kinds and types of social phenomena; of documenting in loving detail the range of things that exist (Lofland, 1971: 13).

With regard to the qualitative research approach, Creswell (1994) infers that a qualitative study is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting. In other words, in qualitative research the researcher interacts or collaborates with respondents fully, a situation which helps the researcher to collect information in a natural environment. Thus, in order to successfully undertake this research, a qualitative approach was employed in the sense that the study aimed at exploring a particular issue in detail.

The justification for the use of qualitative approach in this study is that it digs deeper and collect numerous forms of data and examine them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation. Kothari (2004) also supports that generally, the techniques of focus group interviews, projective techniques and depth interviews are used. Hence, data collection tools used were semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The study

also focussed on non-numeric information. A qualitative research paradigm focussed not only on objective verifiable facts but mainly on the many subjective meanings that people attached to them. It was typically focussed in depth on relatively small samples even single cases to be selected purposively. Additionally, a qualitative research approach through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were used in order to satisfactorily answer the research questions.

Furthermore, Creswell (1994:6) posits that qualitative research is “a process of enquiry centered on building a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting”. Thus, the researcher felt that it was appropriate to adopt qualitative research as it was best suited to help the researcher to come up with answers to the research questions and met the objectives of the study as projected because this was a case study and case studies are qualitative in nature. This research approach was appropriate in giving an accurate description of the lessons and experiences on the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia’s Mbala District of Northern Province.

3.3 Research Design

Research design is a plan on how the study is to be conducted or a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place (Msabila and Nalaila, 2013). It is a plan for how the research is to be conducted. Research design explains what data is required, what methods are going to be used to collect data and analysis and how the research questions will be answered. According to Kothari (2004) a research design stands for advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in the analysis keeping in view the objective of the study. In this study a descriptive research design was used. A descriptive case study is one that is focused and detailed, in which propositions and questions about a phenomenon are carefully scrutinized and articulated at the outset. The main goal of the descriptive case study is to assess a sample in detail and in depth, based on an articulation of a descriptive theory.

The researcher employed a descriptive case study design because there was need for comprehensive understanding of the study on the nature and scope of bride-price. A descriptive approach was used because the study aimed at giving a detailed description of the significance, changing trends and implications of bride-price on marriages. Another justification for the selection of the descriptive case study design is that, it seeks to describe a unit in detail, in context

and holistically. Certainly, this study aimed at establishing the nature and scope of bride-price, which is a particular case in great detail thus it was considered to be favourable enough to look at it as a case study. Ghosh (1992) defines a case study as an intensive study through which one can know the factors and causes of a particular phenomenon and that it is helpful in obtaining in-depth information from a small sample. This was particularly the case in this study as the study aimed at focusing on a single case in detail.

3.4 Study Site

According to Orodho and Kombo (2002), the main reason for selecting a study site is to situate a study from the larger context in which the information can be collected. A well thought, and specific population is fundamental for the research when choosing a study location. Hence, this study was conducted in Zambia's Mbala District (ZMD). Its focus was on the nature and scope, significance, changing trends and implication of bride-price. The scope of the study was in such a way that stakeholders were sampled purposively while acknowledging the different roles played by them. As a consequence, looking at the nature of the study, Mbala District was purposively selected as the location hosts most of the Mambwe people. Thus the Mambwe's who were resident in the district were found to be useful for data collection in the study as indicated under study population below.

3.5 Study Population

According to Creswell (2012:625) "Population is a group of individuals who comprise the same characteristics." With respect to the definitions of population given above, this study population included married couples, marriage counsellors (*ifimbusa*) and village headmen and women from Mbala District. According to Babbie (2007), "an informant is someone who is well vested in the social phenomenon that you wish to study and who is willing to tell you what he/she knows about." Hence, the rationale for the composition of the present study population was based on the view that married people, marriage counsellors, village headmen and women were the ones with knowledge about the nature and scope of bride-price because they had the same characteristic of either paid bride-price in a case of men or bride-price was paid for in a case of women.

3.6 Study Sample Size

Creswell (2012:627) defines a sample as “a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for the purpose of making generalizations about the target population.” According to Brynam (2008:715) “a sample is the segment of the population that is selected for research, it is a subset of the population”. The sample for this study comprised of twenty-six (26) respondents, consisting of four (4) headmen / headwomen, four (4) marriage counsellors, and (eighteen) 18 married men and women. The researcher opted to use a smaller sample size in order to reduce on the cost and time required to prepare the final report.

Table 1: Sample Size

Respondents	Headmen/women	Marriage counsellors	Marriage men and women	Total
Sample size	4	4	18	26

3.7 Sampling Technique

This study employed non-probability sampling. Kothari (1990: 59-60) postulates that, “Non-probability sampling is that sampling procedure which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has of being included in the sample.” In this study, under non-probability sampling the respondents were selected purposively. Brynam (2008:418) argues that, “The goal of purposive sampling is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed.” Purposive sampling was employed in coming up with the four village headmen, marriage counsellors who had been engaged in resolving issues of marriage, and married couples. Purposive sampling means “using your common sense and the best judgement in choosing the right habitations and meeting the right number of the correct people for the purpose of your study” (Kombo, 2014:83). It was used to select a group of people that have the knowledge of what is being investigated and those that were available and willing to be interviewed.

3.8 Data Collection Instruments

In order to gather data for this study, the researcher employed semi structured interview guides and focused group discussions as instruments. The use of these instruments provided the researcher

to collect valid and reliable data. A gap in one of the research instruments was supplemented by the other research instrument.

3.8.1 Semi-Structured Interview Guides

As stated earlier, the researcher collected data using interview owing to the fact that interviews help generate quality answers to questions particularly in qualitative research. In terms of definitions, Sidhu (2006:145) cited in Hambulo (2016) defines an interview as “a two-way method which permits an exchange of ideas and information.” A semi-structured interview has been referred to as a ‘conversation with a purpose’ (Burgess, 1984). The interviewer develops and uses an interview guide, which is a list of open-ended questions and topics that need to be covered during the conversation in a particular order. The open ended nature of the question defines the topic under investigation but provides opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. It often includes prompts to help the interviewee to answer.

The researcher employed the use of interview guides because the flexible structure of the interview allowed the researcher to prompt or encouraged the interviewee if they were looking for more information or found what they were saying interesting. This method gave the researcher the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate or to follow a new line of inquiry introduced by what the interviewee was saying.

3.8.2 Focus Group Discussion / Interviews

Focus group discussion is another technique for collecting qualitative research data from the informants which comprise of only homogeneous members of the target population such as similar in age, profession or educational level and that a specific topic should be discussed with a list of questions to guide the discussion. Kombo and Tromp (2014:95),

This is a type of group in terms of its purpose, size, composition and procedures. A focus group is usually composed of a small group maybe of 6-8 individuals who share certain characteristics, which are relevant for study. The discussion is carefully planned and designed to obtain information on the participants ‘beliefs and perceptions on a defined area of interest.

It is in form of interviews but in a group focused on a specific subject matter. By description, focus group discussion is a basic technique and very satisfactory as Bryman points out that during a focus group discussion interview the informants have an opportunity to modify their response as may be clarified by fellows in the group but the researcher exercises control in order to keep the discussion within the framework of the topic at hand. Bryman (2008:475) states that, “An individual may answer in a particular way but as he or she listens to others’ answers he or she may want to qualify or modify a view or may want to voice agreement to something that he or she probably would not have thought of without the opportunity of hearing the views of others.” Hence, in the current study, the researcher employed the use of focus group discussions to gather data and also this provided opportunity for the researcher to vary the methods of data collection for richer and detailed information from the participants.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

According to Kombo and Tromp (2014:98) good procedure requires that, “a researcher will require permit before embarking on the study. The researcher will then administer research instruments to the respondents.” In research, data collection refers to the gathering of information to prove or refute some assumptions and establish the protocol for recording information (Creswell, 1994). More so, the researcher secured a research permit before embarking on the study in terms of data collection in the field. Thus, the procedure for collecting data for this study was as follows; the researcher started by getting permission to carry out research. Thereafter, the researcher got permission from the village headmen and participants through signing on the consent form. Then the interviews and focus group discussions took place and through that data collection was done.

3.10 Data Analysis

Lewis and Michael (1995) state that data analysis takes different ways depending on the instruments used to collect data and how the researcher presented the information. Additionally, LeCompte and Schensul (1999) indicate that data analysis is the process a researcher uses to reduce data to a story and its presentation. Therefore, data analysis is a mechanism for reducing and organizing data to produce findings that require interpretation. In qualitative research, like this study, according to Orodho and Kombo (2002) the researcher needs to decide how the information is to be analysed once collected before going to the field. In a qualitative research, data analysis

can also be done by means of ‘thematic method’. Thematic analysis entails analysis of major themes or topics that come up in discussion. Hence, themes are formed according to the identified topics. Therefore, the researcher employed thematic analysis method complimented by in-depth explanations presented in narrative form as obtained from the informants, summarizing of key findings as well as the interpretations and conclusion of the data collected.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration entails a careful thinking and reflection on ethical dilemmas related to the practice of qualitative research as well as responsibilities of the research, especially regarding respondents (Cohen *et al.* 2007). According to Kombo (2014:106), ethical considerations imply that, “researchers whose subjects are people or animals must consider the conduct of their research, and give attention to the ethical issues associated with carrying out their research for example, in an experiment where the researcher analyses blood samples”. The primary goal of observing the ethical code in research is aimed at ensuring that participants are treated fairly and with respect during their participation in the study; they receive complete information about the study and how the information they give is to be treated and published with confidentiality. Hence, this researcher had to uphold the ethical standard of practical of research work with regards to informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and protecting the privacy of the respondents. Participants were assured that whatever they shared had to remain confidential and it was only to be used for academic purposes. Anonymity was observed because participant’s identity remained hidden.

3.12 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter discussed the main research methodologies that were used and made justification on most of the types and steps the researcher took during data collection. The research was conducted in Mbala District of Northern Province of Zambia. A descriptive case study design and a qualitative approach were used. The chapter further discussed the research site, population and sample, sampling technique, methods of data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents findings of the study from Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province which aimed at investigating the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people from a civic perspective. Essentially, this chapter is exclusively devoted to the presentation of data collected through interviews and focus group discussions. A summary to the chapter will be provided at the end. However, the chapter begins by giving demographic characteristics of the participants that provided primary data that informed this study.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.2.1 Categories of Participants and their Rates of Responses

During data collection, a total of 26 participants comprising of 4 headmen/women, 4 marriage counselors and 18 married men and women were interviewed and among them, some participated in focus group discussions (FGD). Table 2 below shows the distribution of sample size and categories of participants.

Table 2: Categories and Rates of Responses

Respondents	Headmen /Women	Marriages Counsellors	Marriage men / marriage women	Total
Sample size	4	4	18	26
Actual response	4	4	18	26
Response rate	100%	100%	100%	100%

4.2.2 Gender of the Participants

In terms of gender, of the total 26 participants, 13 (50%) were males and 13 (50%) also were females. Table 3 provides distribution of participants by gender.

Table 3: Distribution by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	13	50
Female	13	50
Total	26	100

4.2.3 Age Distribution among the Participants

The participants had a mix of age groups ranging between 30 years and 80 years. The majority of the participants 12 (46%) were in the age group of 50 to 80 years. Interviewees who were in the age group of 40 to 49 were 8 representing (31%), and 30 to 39 years were 6 (23%) respectively. The table below shows the summary of participants in various age groups.

Table 4: Age Distribution

Age Group (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30 to 39	6	23
40 to 49	8	31
50 to 80	12	46
Total	26	100

4.2.4 Education Levels

In terms of education level, participants who had attained secondary level of education were the majority 9 (35%), then followed by those who did not have any formal schooling 7 (27%). Respondents who had attained primary level of education were 6 (23%). The minority were those who have attained tertiary level of education 4 of them representing (15%). Table 5 below gives a summary on education level of the participants.

Table 5: Education levels

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No school	7	27
Primary	6	23
Secondary	9	35
Tertiary	4	15
Total	26	100

4.2.5 Employment Status

In the area of employment, 4 (15%) were in formal employment whereas 16 (62%) were self-employed (substance farmers). The other 6 (23%) were retirees. Table 6 below shows the distribution by employment.

Table 6: Employment status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Self employed	16	62
Formal employment	4	15
Retirees	6	23
Total	26	100

4.2.6 Years in Marriage

The participants were asked how many years they had been married. Table 7 below provides a summary distribution of years in marriage.

Table 7: Years in Marriage

Years in Marriage	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 to 10	8	31
11 to 20	5	19
21 and above	13	50
Total	26	100

Having provided relevant demographic characteristics of the participants in the study, the remaining part of this chapter addresses the questions or the objectives of the study beginning with the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people. In presenting the findings, data from the study interviews as well as focus group discussions will be combined where necessary. The participants are labelled using the following labels; Interviews with Marriage Counsellors (IMC), Interviews with Village Headman (IVHM), Interviews with Village Headwoman (IVHW), Interviews with married Women (IMW), Interviews with Married Men (IMM) and Focus Group Discussion Participant (FGDP).

4.3 Nature and Scope of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

The first objective was to establish the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District. In trying to achieve this objective, the participants were asked through interviews and focus group discussions on a number of bride-price issues that include the following presented in the subsections below:

4.3.1 Meaning of Bride-Price to the Mambwe People

In trying to understand the meaning of bride-price, participants explained that, bride-price is a cultural practice that makes marriage to be valid and legal among the Mambwe people. According to one marriage counsellor:

“In my own understanding, bride-price which is called (impango) among us the Mambwe people refers to the payment made in kind and monetary form by a groom or his family to the family of the bride in order to make marriage legal or to validate marriage. Marriage can only be called marriage if a man pays bride-price, rather than that, it is not marriage but something else.” (IMC).

In agreement, one of the informants who happened to be a village headman explained in an interview that bride-price is a form of cultural symbolism, representing the acceptance of the woman and man into each other’s families. He stated that: *“Bride-price consists of a contract where material items (such as cattle, goats and other materials) or money are paid by the groom’s family to the brides’ family in exchange for the bride, her labour and her capacity to produce*

children.” (IVHM). In an interview with a village headwoman, she revealed that bride-price is a form of appreciation (token of appreciation) that a man pays for wanting to marry a woman he loves. She stressed in her own words that, “*bride-price is a token of respect to both the bride and groom’s families paid in monetary form or in kind.*” The money or materials are paid to the family of a woman to be married. In her own words, the village headwoman said: “*Bride-price symbolizes that he or she is officially married and known to the parents on the lady’s side. Through bride-price a man is recognized as a member to the family of the lady and respect is given to that man*”. Further, participants from the focus group discussion with men and women explained the meaning of bride-price that, like one participant in an FGD with women indicated:

“Bride-price is a situation through which a man pays some property (such as goods, money, or livestock) for the right or privilege to marry a woman. It is necessary to pay bride price because, it is culturally wrong to take someone’s daughter without paying bride-price.” (FGDP).

Furthermore, bride-price was perceived by some individuals among the Mambwe people as an appreciation from a groom to the bride’s family for having taken good care of a groom’s wife to be from birth to the time of marriage. One of the participants during focus group discussion explained that, “*Bride-price is a sign of appreciation to the side of the lady’s parents for their upbringing of her. It also gives confidence to parents of the lady that the man is responsible enough to take care of their daughter*”. (FGDP).

4.3.2 The Process of Paying Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

During data collection the research found that bride-price follows a well arranged process with a series of events that comes after the payment of (*nsalamu*) which is the money that a man pays to the woman’s family as a way of informing the woman’s family that he has fallen in love with their daughter and his plan is to marry her. One of the participants during FGD revealed that:

“After the payment of ‘nsalamu’ by the man to the family of a lady through a marriage middle man or woman (katampaango). Through the ‘katampaango’ who happens to be a representative of the man go to meet the relatives of the lady to ask on how much bride-price should be paid.

This stage is called 'ukuzya'. That is the beginning of the bride-price negotiations.” (FGDP).

This implies that according to Mambwe tradition bride-price negotiations cannot begin until “*nsalamu*” is paid. The payment of ‘*nsalamu*’ paves way for another stage, in this case bride-price negotiations. Another participant added that:

“Negotiations continue until the two families reach a consensus, it is a bargaining process, the woman’s family agrees on the amount that a man’s family has to pay. When a man together with his family are availed with the list of items or an amount of money, they also sit down and analyse if the charge is fair or not. Negotiations sometimes become challenging and cumbersome if the woman’s family are not considerate.” (FGDP).

Further, on the same issue of coming up with an amount or items that a man is supposed to pay, a marriage counsellor said:

“It is entirely upon the bride’s family to come up with the items or money to be paid. However, the groom’s family have also a right to ask or request for a reduction in the items or money being charged. In its truest sense among us the Mambwe people, the bride’s families usually put into consideration a number of issues such as the economic and social status of the groom and his family, his behaviour and if one is a hard worker or not.” (IMC).

Moreover, from the FGD it was agreed that negotiations come to an end after the family of a man agrees to the proposed payment by the bride’s family. As stated by one of the participants that: *“Once the family of a man agrees to the proposed amount or items, then bride-price is charged. What follows is the payment.”* On the mode of payment another FGD participant explained that:

“If bride-price is charged in form of livestock (cattle or goats), it can be converted into money if at all the groom and his family do not have livestock to pay. Again if bride-price is charged in form of money, it can be

converted into livestock. However, it is important to note that converting is done in line with the market price of such a livestock.” (FGDP).

The allowing of paying in monetary form or livestock form shows the flexibility that parents to the bride have or as a way of not being rigid during the negotiation process. In addition, the village headman during interviews emphasised that:

“Bride-price is to be paid before the wedding takes place, even though in some instances the groom requests that he pays part of the charged amount or items and finishes later even after the wedding. Depending on the bride’s family some may agree to the request, some may not agree to the request. But the normal trend is that bride-price has to be paid in full before the wedding take place.” (IVHM).

The above quotation may imply that bride-price may be in some cases paid in instalments even after marriage ceremony has taken place. Another, marriage counsellor said that:

When bride-price is paid, it is shared among the family members of the bride. The parents from the mother’s side and father’s side of the bride are the ones who share the bride payment. If it is a cow, it becomes the family cow and in most cases if it happens that one of the sons from the family is getting marriage the same cow is used as bride-price. (IMC)

Therefore, the process of bride-price comes to an end once the groom and his family pays in full the charged amount or items.

4.3.3 History and Prevalence of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

The research respondents revealed a long and complex historical background of bride-price. The participants emphasized that bride-price started a long time ago with the ancestors, hence explaining its beginning is not an easy thing. They further pointed out that among the Mambwe bride-price has been a custom, and it is one of the most import traditions in the institution of marriage. One of the marriage counsellors interviewed emphasized that:

“The practice of bride-price is not a new phenomenon, it cannot even be rooted to when it began among us the Mambwe people, it had been there for centuries (campiti-mpiti). Historically, even before our ancestors came to our current Mambwe land they did practice bride-price from where they came from.” (IMC).

It was also revealed by one village headman that, *“All I can say as a Mambwe cultured person is that, bride-price is a long-standing practice.”* The headman further stressed that, *“bride-price has a historical usefulness as an ancient and valued cultural practice which has aided communities and promoted social cohesiveness and harmony throughout time tested history.”*

On the same historical background of bride-price in Mambwe land one of the FGD participants said that: *“I believe that the practice of bride-price is a long standing custom and items used as bride-price in ancient days were categorized into traditional/cultural items such as cattle and goats, money is a recent item. I remember when I was getting married I was charged one cow and that was in the late 60’s.” (FGDP).* In agreement, another FGD participant added that:

“In ancient times, bride-price had cemented and brought families together, even in precolonial days and was not regarded in acquisitive terms, but as a tradition to build and strengthen communities and families. In those days, bride-prices were uniform among us the Mambwe tribe and not varied by familial wealth and that only one cow was charged.”(FGDP).

On the prevalence of bride-price among the Mambwe people, a participant from FGD explained that, *“Bride-price is widely spread among all the Mambwe’s. All the Mambwe people practice bride-price.”* Further, another FGD participant added that:

“Bride-price being part of our culture is followed by everyone, it just differs depending on if a woman getting married has had a child before. For a woman who has a child before bride-price is paid in little amount as a sign of respect (icifulalweso). But, every woman who is getting married has to be paid for. Personally, I have never seen a woman who has been married without paying bride-price. That is not marriage but rather

prostitution or cohabiting. And cohabiting is a taboo in our culture.”
(FGDP).

Therefore, bride-price among the Mambwe people is a historical practice and is culturally rooted. In terms of its prevalence it is being practiced by all the Mambwe people.

4.4 The Significance of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

During data collection, the research discovered that bride-price among the Mambwe people has had a cultural significant as a tradition. It is believed to have operated beneficially to give formal recognition to marriages and protect wives against abuse, stabilize the partnership and to join the two families together. A marriage counsellor in an interview said that:

“Paying bride-price is a cultural practice among us the Mambwe tribe, thus if a person pays bride-price it means that such a person respects our culture. The payment of bride-price in itself signifies respect to our culture. People need to respect their culture. ‘A tradition without culture is dead’ (Umutundu uwaula ulutambi ufwe).”(IMC).

Another marriage counselor when asked on the significance of bride-price responded by saying that: *“Traditionally, bride-price signifies honour and respect, it shows that a woman is worthy.”* Also, a village headman in an interview on the significance of bride-price responded by saying that: *“Payment of bride-price according to our culture signifies that the man or woman is duly married. It brings together both families and respect is given to the man.”* The same findings came out during a focus group discussion with women when one of the participants stated that: *“As women we feel worthy, respected and honoured when bride-price is paid. Even our stay in a home is considered regal and we feel being the owner of the home”* Another participant added by saying: *“one of the significance of bride-price is that, it makes a woman to stay in marriage peacefully, it gives a woman value especially when she produces children, and it is a good practice.”*

Further, one of the participants during a focus group discussion with men revealed that: *“Payment of bride-price has been of integral significance in marriage rites and ceremonies among us the Mambwe tribe.”* Moreover, another participant added that:

“Bride-price signifies that, children born to the couple would be recruited into the kin group of the groom. The bridal payment as it is in our culture and tradition legitimizes the groom as the father of the children born out of the marriage. (FGDP).

From the above quotation the significance of bride-price is entrenched in the cultural practices of the Mambwe people. In cementing the above explanation, another participant lamented that:

If a man defaults in the payment of the prescribed ‘goods’ and services, the bride’s father can claim ownership of the child and the genitor would have no authority over them and the bride. As well, the bride’s father may seize the bride from the purported husband until the culturally accepted items are paid. If a man tries to argue, he can be sued (taken to court) for failing to pay bride-price.”(FGDP).

Significance of bride-price among the Mambwe people is culturally rooted, if bride-price is not paid marriage does not exist but rather cohabiting. Bride-price symbolizes regal and valid marriage recognized by both, the family of a bride and that of a groom.

4.5 The Changing Trends in Bride-Pricing among the Mambwe People

As alluded to earlier, the history of bride-price is a long one and is part of the Mambwe culture. The researcher during data collection found that the practice of bride-price has been changing from time to time, it is not static but dynamic. The dynamism of bride-price is in form of pricing which happens in monetary form or items. The research found that in the current era and more especially in the urban part of Mbala District bride-price has been commercialised, it has been turned into a business venture. However, the study also found that, in Mbala rural some parents are still following the traditional way of charging. In an interview with one of the village headmen, he said that:

“Historically, our ancestors used to charge one cow (a bull) only. Other things included beads in small amounts to the woman’s family as a token

of appreciation. But currently we have witnessed a dramatic change in the way bride-price is being charged, it has been commercialised.”(IVHM).

The same findings came out during interviews with a marriage counsellor who lamented that: *“In paying bride-price, people just used to pay one male cow to the bride’s parents. In addition, small things like hoes and axes were given. But this time we have learnt from other tribes or ethnic groups who are making money through bride-price.”* Another marriage counsellor said in his own words that,

“From my interactions with different families, some people charge a commercial rate for bride-price to compensate for losing a daughter (swemo mwana cinotwavyalila kulilapo). It is like the woman’s family is losing a daughter when she gets married. This is because some women get detached from their own relatives when they marry. So this coupled with the feeling of how much they may have invested in their daughter’s education and upbringing would want to charge something between 15 to 30 thousand Kwacha. This is not a secret, sometimes such factors are mentioned during marriage negotiations.” (IMC).

The explanation given by the marriage counsellor above shows that some parents charge bride-price basing on how much they have spent on their girl child education and upbringing. This as well shows that there must be some disparities in bride-pricing because parents spend differently in the upbringing of their female children. The same marriage counsellor added that:

“Nowadays parents have failed to understand that educating and taking care of a female child is their responsibility as parents and not a way of investment. We educate a girl child so that she can have a better life with her husband and their children. Moreover, as parents we do educate a male child too, but we don’t ask a woman to compensate us for educating her husband. Hence, over exaggerating of bride-price is one of the sources of gender imbalances against men” (IMC).

In tandem, from the focus group with men and women it was also found that the practice of bride-price has had a shift from what the forefathers used to do and what is happening at present. One of the participants stated that:

“Unlike in the past, nowadays people have turned bride-price into a business, people want to make money. Most families are following the ability of a man to pay. They would fix a price basing on the type of work a man does. They are following the economic status of a man, thus, the culture of charging one cow has come to an end more especially in Mbala urban. But in Mbala rural some families are still following the old practice of paying one cow.” (FGDP).

Another FGD participant added: *“In our tradition, we used to give small things not like selling the daughter. These days, people are selling their daughters you would hear charging even reaching between K20, 000.00 or K30, 000.00.”* From the same FGD another informant added that:

“In the old days it never mattered whether a child is educated or not, the charge was the same. They charged a male cow and its significance was that it was used for farming as a family cow, and sometimes the same cow was paid as bride-price if at all a son from the same family wanted to marry. But these days what is happening is a gender mistreatment against men, that is why some men also end up mistreating their wives” (FGDP).

Similarly, one participant in another focus group discussion emphasised that parents these days look at various things including recovering money they spent on their daughter in different aspects. The participant said that:

“Parents are over charging men because they want to gain back their expenses for bringing up, educating and taking care of their daughter. If she is educated, her level of education is also a determinant on how much a man has to pay. Some parents do even boast that they would manage to build a houses or buy cars because they have many daughters” (FGDP).

The above information obtained from FGDP where parents boast of building houses or buying motor vehicles using *lobola* could be worrying because brides are considered as commodities to use in exchange for other needed properties by parents of brides. Another FGD informant in the same group added by saying:

“Those who would have educated their children usually charge more bride-price. Such parents would claim that we have spent a lot money on our daughter. So they see it as a loss when she goes into marriage, joining another family (the groom’s) where she will end up surrendering to the authority of her husband. So the only way out to compensate for the loss is to charge following that amount you used to educate her (kulilapo). But this is again what brings problems in homes among couples as some men would feel they have bought a woman’ (FGDP).

Consequently, in the current era bride-price has been commercialised and its determinant is the economic status of a man. Parents have failed to recognise that upbringing of female child is their responsibility and not a business venture.

4.6 The Implications of Bride-Pricing on the Institution of Marriage among the Mambwe People

During data collection, on implications of bride-price, the researcher engaged informants through both the interviews and focus group discussions, the research found that bride-price as a practice among the Mambwe people has positive and negative effects on the institution of marriage. Some of the positive effects impact both the man and the woman thereby solidifying marriages. However, negative effects also impact either a woman or a man thereby posing challenges in marriages. Thus, data on the implications of bride-price on the institution of marriage is presented in two subsections, the first one is on the positive effects, and the second one is on the negative effects.

4.6.1 Positive Implications of Bride-Price on Marriages among the Mambwe People

The researcher found that there are three major positive implications that come as a result of paying bride-price and these are, respect and honor, sign of love and solidification of marriage.

a. Promotion of Respect and Honour in Marriage

Respect and honor are very vital in any relationship, the institution of marriage inclusive. From the findings the researcher discovered that bride-price is attached to respect and honor in the institution of marriage. In an interview, a marriage counsellor said that:

“According to our culture a man shows respect to his lover by paying (nsalamu) and utmost by paying bride-price. When the other family members and the neighbors hear that bride-price has been paid for a woman it gives respect and honor to the father of a woman and to the father of a man as well.” (IMC).

Further, in an interview with another marriage counsellor it came out clearly when the interviewee said, *“bride-price is paid as a token of respect to both families of the bride and bride-groom.”* Another interviewee who happens to be a village headman said in his own words that:

“When I was getting married I paid bride-price to my lovely wife to show her and her family as well as my family that she is the only one I love. That is why I paid for her at once, I did that to prove to her that I love her, she is worthy to me.” (IVHM).

Further, one female interviewee gave an explanation on what she felt when her husband paid bride-price for her. She said that, *“When my husband paid for me, I was very happy, I felt valued, respected and honored.”* She claimed that almost every women feels happy, valued, respected and honored when her man pays bride-price in readiness for marriage.

The views below also came out in a focus group discussion with men when one of the informants in his own words said:

“During the wedding ceremony, either traditional or church wedding if a man has paid both parents and including the couple rejoices. In fact, the church cannot even allow a wedding to take place if the man has not fully paid bride-price. If it is a traditional wedding it can take place if the family of the woman agrees, but it shows no respect and sometimes people in the

community do lough at the parents for giving their daughter for free.”
(FGDP).

Interestingly, the focus group discussion with women also yielded similar findings. For example, one woman had this to say:

“If parents allow a wedding to take place, during marriage some women feel inferior as if they are not respected and valued by the husbands. During marriage misunderstandings some men even shout at their wives that I got you for free because your parents saw that you have no values and you were a burden to them. So if a man has not paid, respect becomes minimal in marriage.” (FGDP).

It was noted from the focus group discussions and the interviews that a man is regarded by the Mambwe people to be the head of the house. One participant of the FGD explains, *“It is a responsibility of a man to pay bride-price because is the head of the house and family.”* A man is the one who marries while a woman is the one being married by a man. Another FGD informant supported by saying, *“When a woman gets married her name changes to that of the husband, even the names of the children in a family bares the sir name of the father.”* Another FGD participant said:

“The payment is done so that you don’t think you are married just to joke. You know, if it is not paid, that will suggest that you are not properly married and people can just insult you in one way or the other. But when the bride-price is paid, nobody can ridicule you.” (FGDP).

So a man is the one on top of things in relation to marriage including paying of bride-price. A man is called a man and ready to marry if he is able to pay bride-price. In an interview, one woman in her own words had this to say:

“It shows how responsible a man is towards me as a woman. If a man fails to pay for me, how can he be sure that he will be capable of taking care of me? A man is the one who marries so paying shows that he is really ready and prepared to take-care of me as a wife and our children.” (IMW).

According to Mambwe culture as found by the research, respect and honor to either a man or a woman come in only when a man has paid bride-price. If a man fails to pay for a woman then respect and honor diminishes or becomes questionable.

b. Bride-Price as a Sign of Love Between the Bride and Groom

In a relationship between a man and a woman love is believed to be expressed in different ways. This research found that paying of bride-price is one of the ways in which love is expressed between the two families and more especially by the groom and his family to the bride's family. From the interviews one woman said, *"The payment of bride-price is a sign of love that a man has towards a woman."* A marriage counsellor gave an explanation on what transpired during her time that:

"When I was getting married, immediately after my husband paid for me, my parents called me and said, have you seen how this man our son in-law loves you. You should not disappoint him either by being disobedient to him or by looking to other men, we as your parents we know this one who has even paid for you."(IMC).

In Mambwe tradition the payment of bride-price proves that a man is truly in love with a woman. In tandem, another woman in an interview revealed that, *"When my husband and his family paid for me, I failed to sleep due to happiness because I truly believed that he loves me."* A man can only pay for a woman he loves.

Similarly, during FGD one of the informants stated that: *"In our tradition, a man who is in love with a woman demonstrates his love towards her lover in two important events. The first one is the payment of Nsalamu and the second one is the payment of bride-price"*. Another FGD participant supported this by saying, *"Payment of bride-price is the second important stage in the marriage process."* Thus, bride-price in Mambwe land is seen as a sign of showing the kind of love that a man has towards a woman.

c. Bride-Price as a form of Unification and Solidification of Marriages and Families

Unification and solidification of marriages according to the research findings was one of the positive implications of bride-price. During interviews, one of the village headman responded that:

“One of the major implications of bride-price is that, it solidifies marriages. It cements the relationship between the family of a man and the family of a woman. After the wedding it is not easy for a woman’s family to have full control of the affairs of the married couple because the man has paid all the dues.” (IVHM).

In another interview with a marriage counsellor, it was noted that a marriage where a man has not paid bride-price is full of misunderstandings and in most cases a man is not respected by the wife. Even the family members of the woman do not give respect to the man. Such marriages keep on limping. The interviewee revealed that, *“Some parents take their son in-law to court for not having paid bride-price.”* The same interviewee added that, *“Generally, a family cannot be stable, unified or solidified if a man is taken to court by the family of a woman, it creates marriage break ups.”* Therefore, bride-price according to the findings unifies marriages.

In addition, during the FGD’s one of the participants stated that: *“Bride-price enables the two families to be together and become one family. One family’s problems become yours too, when one family is mourning you are also mourning and when one family is celebrating you are also celebrating.”* Marriage is an institution in which two different families come together to make up one family. During focus group discussions one of the participants said, *“When a man pays for a woman the two families come together as one family.”* Another FGD participant buttressed that, *“The parents of a woman are now fully aware that their daughter has a man who has even paid for her, so she is now a property of someone who is known and has paid for her.”* By recognizing the groom’s family, the two families become unified.

4.6.2 Negative Implications of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

Despite bride-price having a number of positive implications on marriages among the Mambwe people as presented from the research findings above, it has also a number of negative implications which are presented below:

a. Bride-Price as a Basis of Male Dominance and Exploitation of Women in Marriage

The research found that through bride-price some women were being exploited by their husbands on the pretext that the man had paid for them. One of the marriage counsellors in an interview had this to say:

“Sometimes bride-price enslaves the woman, some men disrespect their wives because they think they have bought a woman. This has come in because of lack of understanding on the rationale of paying bride-price. As a marriage counselor I have counselled a lot of couples in which women are being abused by their husbands because of bride-price.” (IMC).

In an interview with a village headman, he said that: *“One of the problems that comes with the payment of bride-price is that women take subordination positions to their husband when bride-price is paid.”* The head man further added that, *“Even in traditional teachings that are done before marriage, women are told to be submissive to their husbands as they have paid for them.”* (IVHM).

Another village headman in an interview pointed out that, *“If the man has paid bride-price, he has ultimate authority over the wife. If the wife shows signs of bad behaviour the husband has the right to complain to her relatives”* The same view of exploitation came out in a focus group discussion with men where most of them claimed ownership of a woman on the pretext that they had paid for them. For instance one male informant said that, *“As a man I have full control of my wife since I have paid bride-price in full and I expect my wife to be submissive to me. As a husband I am entitled to total obedience from my wife.”*(FGDP).

Further, one of the participant from the FGD conducted added by saying, *“A man has power to treat his wife the way he wants when bride-price is paid but this may not be the case where the payment is not done.”* During the same FGD another participant stated that a wife has to do what her husband tells her especially if the man paid bride-price for her. In his own words the man said, *“When you marry your wife, she should know what you want and do not want and she should obey you.”* (FGD Participant).

Women are sometimes viewed as a properties of the husband. An interview with one woman who happened to be a victim of being seen as a property by her husband revealed that,

“I picked a quarrel with my husband over issues of money for my parent’s fertilizer. When I asked him to buy fertilizer for my parents he refused, and when I insisted that he had no option apart from buying fertilizer, he answered me by saying how can I keep on giving your parents money for fertilizer when I paid them a lot of money as bride-price. He further told me that you are the most expensive property I have in my house.” (IMW).

Interestingly, the focus group discussion with women also yielded similar findings. Some women attributed the payment of bride-price to the abuses that they were subjected to by their husbands because men claimed ownership as if they had bought them. One of the FGD women participant revealed that, *“We women we are turned to properties of men after paying bride-price and are exploited to the maximum and this deprives our rights as women.”* Hence, the researcher found from most of the respondents that because of bride-price women were being exploited by men.

b. Bride-Price as a Basis for ‘Sexual Abused’ of Women in Marriage

During research findings another negative implication which came out as a result of paying bride-price was the limiting of women’s control over sexual matters. It was revealed that some men viewed their wives as sexual properties or sexual objects. One of the marriage counsellors visited during data collection said that, *“I have handled a number of cases in which men force their wives to have sexual intercourse with them even when one is not feeling well on the pretext that they paid for their wives.”* The same problem came out from the findings during focus group discussion with women when they complained that most women felt powerless on sexual matters. One participant said that, *‘It is like when a man pays bride-price he feels he has bought everything more especially the woman’s private parts.’* Another woman in a FGD said that:

“The moment he says I paid a lot money for you, you have no choice but to give in because when you deny him sex, you would think that he will look for other women. For the sake of peace, you just allow him to do what he wants even when you are not willing.” (FGDP).

In an interview with one of the marriage counsellors it was discovered that women were taught not to deny having sex with their husbands as doing so risked them losing their husbands. A marriage counsellor in his own words said that,

“During counselling we tell women with emphasis not to be refusing having sex with their husband even if one is not in the mood for sex. This is done as one way of protecting their husbands from going out of home and looking for other women.” (IMC).

Another marriage counsellor seemingly in agreement also said that:

“As marriage counsellors we usually counsel a woman to be satisfying her husband in bed (sexually), it is for her own good. It means that even if the husband gets exposed to other women, he will not easily get attracted. A wife has an obligation to sexually help her husband all the time the husband wants it.” (IMC).

According to a village headman, he finds no reason as to why a wife should deny a husband sexual intercourse when he has paid for her. He said that, *“It is immoral and untraditional for a woman to refuse sexual intercourse with her husband. Unless if a woman is sick (ngatalwala) or attending her monthly period (alikumpepo)”*. During data collection, it was further discovered that some men even beat up their wives when they refused to give them sex. One participant from the FGD with men said that:

“Paying of bride-price to some men is a passport to have sex with their wives at any time. When a woman refuses some men end up beating them. Even elders and traditional marriage counsellors do tolerate that.” (FGDP).

Further another man a FGD participant said, *paying of bride-price to some men is a passport to having sex any time they want with their wives*. From his own words he said:

“A man would say, because I have paid bride-price, anytime I want sex I should have it. Even when a woman is not ready, they force them to do it.

Even when a woman is attending a period, some men still demand to have sex. If the wife refuses, the husband feels he has the right to beat her.” (FGDP).

Moreover, the research found that the issue of sexual abuse went hand in hand with the issue of child bearing. A man pays bride-price with a view to having children from a woman. The research found that bearing children was one of the main reasons why men and women got married. When a woman failed to have a child of her own, in most marriages men did claim for divorce and that bride-price be paid back to them. One FGD participant said that:

“When a man gets married and has paid bride-price the expectation is that the wife has to bear children for the husband. If not then a man can get married to another woman and claim bride-price refund.” (FGDP).

Another FGD participant added by saying, *“Even the father and mother in-law of a woman, their expectation is that once their son is married and paid bride-price, a wife has to bear them a child.”* Another informant from the same FGD supported this by saying that: *“Some parents even ask their son to divorce and request that the bride-price be paid back since a woman cannot conceive, she is called a barren woman (Ing’umba).”* (FGDP). A marriage counsellor also said that, *“I have had a number of divorce counselling cases which were as a result of a woman failing to conceive and give birth to a child. Most men claim back the bride-price which they paid at the beginning of marriage.”* (IMC). In line with the data collected it was revealed that child bearing was one of the key factors why men paid bride-price. This was evidenced by the fact that most men claimed the refund of bride-price at the time of divorce if a woman failed to conceive.

c. Bride-Price as an ‘Economic Burden’ on Men

Due to the contemporary higher bride-pricing being experienced in the Mambwe land and more especially in the urban area of Mbala District, the research findings revealed that there was infliction of economic suffocations on men. One of the marriage counsellors in an interview explained that, *“Currently, in urban parts of Mbala district there is a shift in the payment of bride-price. Men are being charged a lot of money, a situation which is causing economic crisis on them.”*

Another marriage counsellor said, *“Most young working class men are forced to get loans and pay for the bride and later on start suffering loan deductions, a situation which is leading to financial crisis.”* The same marriage counsellor further added that: *“Some marriages are being broken as a result of financial crisis in homes which sometimes is as a result of over spending during bride-price payment and also during wedding receptions.”*

In a focus group discussion one participant, a newly wedded young man said that: *“As men we are suffering so much because we are paying a lot of money for us to marry despite marriage being a basic need.”* In an interview one married man responded that: *“Nowadays payment of bride-price has turned into financial mistreatment on some of us men because we are made to pay more than we can afford”* (IMM).

Further, another FGD participant added that: *“This has resulted in poverty in marriages since it is costly and over charged, sometimes men are left with nothing after the payment of bride-price and then they suffer after the wedding because all the money that would be used to feed the family was used to marry.”* The problem of economic burden on men also came out during a FGD with women in which one of the participants responded that: *“Sometimes men have to borrow a lot and go into debt and impoverishment in order to pay bride-price and may have no income.”* Another female participant added by saying:

“Some men are ‘overcharged’ thus, leading to many financial hardships at the start of the marriage. Even us women are able to see that my man has been over charged but we don’t have rights to challenge our parents, thus, some women end up helping a man by giving him some money to go and pay bride-price to her parents” (FGDP).

The researcher noted that overcharging of bride-price was as a result of copying other marriage norms from the neighbouring tribes and cultures as well as viewing bride-price as a business or fundraising venture.

d. Bride-Price as a Basis for ‘Loss of Respect’ Among Men

It was discovered that a man loses respect if at all he fails to raise money and pay for bride-price. Loss of respect was mentioned as a consequence of the inability to pay. A village headman

explained that: *“Disrespecting comes from both sides either from a man’s family or from a woman’s family. If a man fails to pay they don’t regard him with respect, and if they overcharge him then the man’s side of the family disrespect the woman’s side.”*(IVHM). A marriage counsellor said that:

“Nowadays people have failed to recognise the purpose of marriage, what is happening is that, if a lady from a well to do family falls in love with a poor man, people disrespect her and the family for marrying a poor man and some men develop inferiority complex. Inferiority complex affects the marriage and traditionally, a woman is perceived to have dominated the marriage.”(IMC).

Another marriage counsellor revealed that: *“Disrespect for the women in a marriage where bride-price was not paid also emerged because such women are considered to be living ‘in prostitution’.* *In the same vein, the husband is not considered as part of the family or a son-in-law.”* (IMC). It was discovered during data collection that men felt humiliated when they failed to pay bride-price. Manhood is questioned if at all a man fails to pay.

e. Bride-Price and the Limitation of Women’s Decisions in Marriage

Limitation of women’s participation in decision making in marriages was one of the implications of bride-price among the Mambwe people. Women have little or no say when it comes to major issues affecting the family. One of the FGD participants with men stated that: *“We men pay for our wives because we are the head of the house and we are in-charge of the family affairs.”* Another one added by saying, *“I have authority over decision marking in my home, a woman should lower herself on issues of making decisions in the home.”* From the same FGD it was generally revealed that by paying bride-price women sold their rights of decision making to men. A woman could not argue against a decision by her husband. If she did argue she was considered as being insubordinate and undisciplined to the husband.

One of the marriage counsellor affirmed the above problem in his own words by saying that:

“I have come across a number of marital cases that are as a result of men being in control of every decision at home, a situation that leads to

misunderstandings and quarrels among couples. Even educated men who strictly follow traditions are culprits in mistreating their wives in terms of dictatorial tendencies of leading a home. This is the reason why there is an increase in marriage breakups or divorces and more especially among educated couples.” (IMC).

Similarly, the same findings came out during an FGD with women when one of the participants said that: *“When it comes to decision making, most of us women take a passive role and men take an active role. This is what we are taught during marriage teachings (amafunde yacupo).”* Another female participant said:

“Even in decisions related to family planning men are the ones who play an active role. If he says I want us to have such a number of children, us women fail to argue because in our tradition a woman who argues with a husband is considered to be a nuisance or not having being properly taught (Chipelelo).” (FGDP).

From these findings, bride-price hinders active participation of women in decision making in marriages. This leads to gender imbalances in the home as women become victims of men.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented findings of the study on the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia’s Mbala district of Northern Province. The findings were presented in line with the four objectives of the study. The findings revealed that bride-price is a long-standing practice which is culturally rooted. It is used to validate or legitimize marriages. However, the findings also showed that the pricing of bride-price over the years has been moved away from the traditional practice of mere appreciation and as a sign of respect to a business venture or fundraising venture for the bride’s family. Positively, bride-price solidifies marriages, it shows respect and honour and it is a sign of love. Negatively, bride-price contributes to women being sexually abused in marriages, loss of respect, male dominance in marriages and economic burden on men. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents a discussion of findings of the study from Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province which sought to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people. The chapter looks at the meaning of bride-price, process, history and prevalence changing trends and implications of bride-price among the Mambwe people. As earlier alluded, the study intended to use the theory of gender with respect to the concepts of masculinity and feminism. Consequently, the theory of gender is integrated in the discussion of the findings. The study as well engages other related literature findings in the discussion. However, before discussing the findings of the study, the chapter begins with a brief discussion on the demographic characteristics of the participants that provided data that informed this study.

5.2 Nature and Scope of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

The first objective was to establish the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District. In trying to achieve the first objective, the researcher considered researching on the meaning of bride-price, process of bride-pricing, history and prevalence of bride-price in Mambwe land as discussed below:

5.2.1 Meaning of Bride-Price to the Mambwe People

Findings from the study indicated that bride-price is an embedded and deeply engrained practice in the cultural ethos of the Mambwe people. The research revealed that bride-price as a concept is called *impango* in Mambwe local language. Bride-price among the Mambwe is conceptualized as the payment made in kind and monetary form by a groom or his family to the family of the bride in order to make marriage legal or to validate marriage. Similarly, Sambe *et.al*, (2013) conceptualized bride-price as the payment made in kind, cash or material as demanded by custom of a group by a groom or his family to the family of the bride in order to make the union legitimate. This means that among the Mambwe tribe marriage can only be valid and legalized when bride payment is done. As also noted by Bourdillon (1997), the payment is made to legalize marriages and traditional marriages depend on the payment of bride-price to be valid. From this study's

definitions of bride-price it is prudent to acknowledge that it is a civic issue which is gender and culturally enshrined.

Another definition that came from the research findings is that bride-price is a contractual payment in which material items such as such as cattle, goats and other materials (livestock) or money are paid by the groom's family to the brides' family in exchange for the bride, her labour and her capacity to produce children. In tandem, Oguli Oumo (2004) states that bride-price consists of a contract where material items (often cattle or other animals) or money are paid by the groom to the bride's family in exchange for the bride, her labour and her capacity to produce children. The contractual payment agreed is generally intended to reflect the perceived value of the lady or young woman. The findings are also similar to those of Sara (2017) who also conceptualized bride-price as the amount of money or property or wealth paid by the groom or his family to the parents of the woman before marriage of their daughter to the groom. It is the payment in cash or property by husband and his family to the Bride's family.

The one to pay is the groom (*siwinga*) or a man's family to the family of the bride (*nawinga*). There is no other way round about it, only a groom and his family have to pay and not a family of a bride. In relation to masculinity and femininity theories that guided this study, the conceptualization of bride-price according to the findings from the study is a gender (masculinity/femininity) issue and is socially constructed in the sense that, it only calls for men to pay a situation which promote masculinity as opposed to supporting femininity. As supported by Connel (1999), masculinity does not exist except in contrast with femininity, thus it involves the socially constructed characteristics of men or what it is expected of men especially in relation to women. Further, the research revealed that the concept of bride-price being a gender and socially constructed matter promotes gender identity in favour of men. As Cleaver (2002) put it, gender identity refers to activities, traits, and values that are socially, contextually, historically dependent and form a basis for identifying the roles of men and women.

5.2.2 The Process of Paying Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

From the findings of the study, the process of bride-price begins after the payment of *insalamo* followed by *ukwipusha* by the groom and his family. The groom and his family sends a marriage middle man/woman (*katampango*) to a woman's family to ask them on how much is to be paid as

bride-price. Then the family of the woman calls for their relatives such as the uncles (*yayama*) and the aunts (*yamangu-senge*) to the bride. According to Mambwe tribe the brother to the mother is the one called uncle and the sister to the father is the one called auntie. Negotiations then begin until the bride's and the groom's families reach an agreement on how much is to be paid. The findings revealed that the woman's family is the one to set the price while the man's family only agrees that the set amount is normal. If the man's family feels that the price is too high they have the right to ask for reduction until they are satisfied.

The findings collaborate with those of Mangena and Sambulo (2013) that the institution of bride-price was a noble thing for both the Shona and the Ndebele people of Zimbabwe. It was the first step in the formation of every family and was a cultural requirement for the establishment of every family. Also Mangena and Sambulo's study revealed that the bride's family is the one responsible in coming up or setting of the amount to be paid by the groom through negotiations. Correspondingly, (Falana, 2019) noted that bride price is that first and compulsory negotiable payment either in cash or in kind, a man pays to the parent of a girl or lady he intends marry in order to gain access to a relationship with the girl, which will in turn bring about his own family.

Further, the findings revealed that during negotiations a number of factors are put into consideration in determining the price to be paid. Such factors include; the economic and social status of the groom and his family, his behaviour and if one is a hard worker or not. At the same time they also consider the education level of the bride as well her behaviour. Similarly, Moono's (2019) findings in Zambia revealed a number of considerations including the ethnic background of both the bride and the groom, the bride's level of education, the need to meet costs associated to the girl's upbringing, the groom's status, and the virginity of a bride among others. This was also supported by Borgerhoff's (1995) study which found that a bride's education, behavior, social and economic status were strong predictors of the value of the bride-price in Kenya.

In terms of femininities and bride-price, it was observed that girls are socialised right away from childhood to grow up as 'good' girls and become 'good' women/brides in order to attract responsible husbands capable of paying good amounts of bride-price and this practice cements girls' femininities. As a result, culturally, girls are taught how to dress well, sit well, respect elders and boys, walk, talk and even how to 'perform well in bed after marriage' and never to annoy the

husband even if he wrongs her. It can be observed that such processes and socialisation of the girls and brides into what is referred to as 'behaving well as a woman' tends to reinforce the gender stereotypes of what a 'well behaved' woman should be and it's this socialisation that perpetuates femininities and masculinities (Schmidt 1991 and Maama 1996).

Interestingly, the research found that during negotiations a bride and a groom are not part of the team, the bride even though being part of the family has no right to discuss issues pertaining to the amount of money/material to be paid for her. The same findings were noted by Ashraf *et al* (2016) that a bride and a groom play minimal or no role in the negotiation process of bride-pricing. Parents and other elder family members are in complete control of the decisions.

The process of bride-price concludes only when a man has finished the payments. In an ideal situation bride-price is paid before marriage takes place. However, the research also discovered that sometimes a bride's family can allow a marriage ceremony to take place even though a groom has not paid fully the due amount. The man is allowed to be paying in instalments until he finishes the whole amount. If a man is charged to pay a cow that can be converted to money at the same time money can be converted into a cow or any other relevant items. When bride-price is paid, it is shared among the family members of the bride. The parents from the mother's side and father's side of the bride are the ones who share the bride payment. If it is a cow, it becomes a family cow.

The two theories that guided the study are integrated to the findings of this research in the sense that the process of bride-price was revealed from the participants as a payment and exchange of other bridal gifts. Although they differed in age, class and level of education and other social differences, almost all the reasons given in favour of bride-price were related, gendered. The notions of femininity and masculinity tend to play a large part in the process of bride-price. As supported by Lorber (1995) that bride-price payment and some of the procedures and experiences involved are heavily influenced by the notion of masculinity, femininity and highly gendered.

5.2.3 History and Prevalence of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

The findings revealed that the practice of bride-price is an old aged tradition among the Mambwe people. It has a long historical background which is deeply rooted in the culture and it has become a custom. According to the findings, the practice of bride-price is one of the most important

cultural considerations in the institution of marriage. All the participants in this qualitative study responded that the practice of bride-price is not a new phenomenon. It cannot even be traced where it began among the Mambwe people. The findings of this study are similar to Hughes (1995) findings which revealed that, the practice of bride-price is a long standing marriage rite and is deeply embedded as a valued cultural norm in Ghana, it is an historical Ghanaian marriage rite. These findings are also similar to Chireshe and Chreshe (2010) who explained that in Zimbabwe bride-price is a cultural practice that is universally accepted and practiced by all the tribes.

In terms of prevalence, the practice of bride-price is widespread among all the Mambwe people. The research found that no marriage can be validated or legalized minus the payment of bride-price, all Mambwe people practice bride-price. In fact, all the participants that took part in providing primary data for this study echoed that a situation where a man and a woman start to live together as husband and wife without the consent of the parents (payment of bride-price) does not amount to marriage but to cohabiting (*kulongozya*) and it is a taboo (*isiku*) in Mambwe culture. In the same vein, Goody, and Stanley (1973) explain that the payment of bride-price has also been an integral part of marriage rites and ceremonies in African culture. The payments are most prevalent in Africa; more than 90 percent of sub-Saharan societies traditionally make such marriage payments. Correspondingly, Siwani (2007) writes that bride-price is a widespread tradition in most cultures in Southern Africa, some of the tribes who practice bride-price include; Shona, Venda, Zulu, and Ndebele among others. Correspondingly, the theory of gender is a long standing societal issue and it is part of the society. Despite calls from a number of gender activists advocating for gender equality the society more especially in rural areas remains advocating either for manliness in terms of men and womanliness in terms of women.

5.3 The Significance of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

Research findings revealed that the practice of bride-price has had a cultural significance as a tradition. Culturally, bride-price signifies a respect to the Mambwe culture. As one of the marriage counselors in response during data collection said “*umutundu uwaula ulutambi ufwe*” meaning “a tribe without culture is a dead one”. It is believed to have operated beneficially to give formal recognition to marriages and protect wives against abuse, stabilize the partnership and to join the two families together. Bride-price payment seals the marriage-contract, acts as a guarantee of the

stability of the marriage, and is compensation to the father for the loss of his daughter. Bride-price is legal proof of marriage, it is significant for inheritance and determining the lineage of any children of the marriage such that if a husband dies, it allows a wife to prove that they were officially married. This was supported by John Boulard Forkuor *et al* (2018) that in terms of cultural significance, there are several reasons for the payment of bride-price. It ratifies the marriage and gives a certain degree of self-respect to both husband and wife. Similarly, Falana's (2019) study found that, generally, the payment of bride-price marks the beginning of any marriage. It makes a marriage to be legal, and to show the legitimacy of children, as bearing children out of wedlock especially in the African society is a taboo.

The research findings of the study also revealed that bride-price is significant because it makes a woman to stay in a marriage with a peaceful mind. It also gives her value especially when she produces children. It guarantees women with security in their marriages and their new homes. Bride-price enhances pride to the woman, makes her feel comfortable and important. It promotes the wife and seals her status as wife, as a worthy woman. This finding is consistent with a study done by Chilufya (2008) that revealed that, bride-price is significant in the sense that it makes a woman sit in the marriage peacefully, it gives her value especially when one produces children.

The same finding was further supported by Chuunga (2015) who revealed that bride-price promotes the 'official' wife and seals her status as wife, as a worthy woman. It also cements the relationship between the bride's family and the groom's family. In relation to the feminist perspective, a woman is of value and has something valuable to contribute to every aspect of the family, country and a world at large (Ropers-Huilman, 2003). Integrating the findings to the theory that guided this study, the payment of bride-price promotes femininity because payment is perceived as a value, a contribution that a woman contributes to the family at the time of marriage, at the same time it makes women feel that they are women, (womanliness) 'they are paid for'. (Hooks, 2000). On the other hand, when a man pays bride-price he is considered to be a responsible man in society. Men feel they are men (manliness) which is masculinity (Hooks, 2000).

5.4 The Changing Trends in Bride-Pricing among the Mambwe People

Research findings revealed that bride-price has been changing from time to time depending on the needs of the society. In Mambwe land historically, the ancestors used to charge one animal, 'a

bull' which is used for family farming. Other small items included holes, axes, and linens for the bride's parents. All the headmen interviewed explained that cattle were the main animals that were considered mostly as bride payment. The idea of paying in form of money or other items were considered by the forefathers only when a groom and his family had no cattle to pay. Even then, an animal would be charged and converted into other items or money. This is in line with Chondoka (1988), who in his book titled 'Marriages in Zambia: A Cultural History' that, traditionally, many groups such the Tonga people negotiated bride-price in terms of cows. He further added that, in areas where cattle were traditionally kept, marriage payments were negotiated in cattle, while in other areas they were negotiated in terms of small valuable items such as iron tools, beads, grain, bark, cloth, animal skins, and money. Cows are mostly used as bride-payment because of the value that is attached. Traditionally, Mambwe's considered a rich person as one who has heads of cattle. The number of cows one has, expresses his or her level of wealth.

However, the research findings revealed that, contemporary, bride pricing has increased drastically as most of the families are over-charging men who want to marry their daughters. As observed by the informants that, Mambwe culture has witnessed a dramatic change in the way bride-price is being charged, it has been commercialised, turned into a business. Similarly, the findings by Matembe and Ndila (2013) revealed that the practice appears to have become commercialized and to have lost much of its traditional value in many instances. This was also in tandem with Dery's (2015) study conducted in Ghana in which it was observed that in recent times bride-price in some parts of Ghana especially the Nandom traditional area has been commercialized and parents see it as an avenue from poverty. Thus, parents virtually sell off their daughters in order to amass wealth.

From the research findings, the change in bride-pricing has been necessitated by the fact that people have lost the ideal cultural meaning and significance of it. The cultural purpose of bride-price has been ignored. People have turned bride-price into a business, and people want to make money. Most families are following the ability of a man to pay. In the same vein, Dura's (2015) observations were that bride-price seems to have lost its original meaning. For instance, findings on using bride payment to fundraise for kitchen parties and to raise money for paying marriage counsellors for the bride, among other factors just show how the original essence of bride-price is being altered. This research further revealed that men were also paying because they wanted to get married and to show off that they had respect for the wife to be and the family. Integrating these

findings relating to the masculinity theory, paying as a way of showing off was one of the means of showing 'manliness'. This can be concluded in line with the masculinity argument that the amount one pays as bride-price contributes to his feelings of 'manliness' (MacInnes, 1998).

The research findings also revealed that some people were copying the attitude of overcharging from other tribes as a result of multiculturalism. It was noted that in some cultures people charged bride-price as one of the ways of being compensated for bringing up the girl child. Interestingly, the researcher found that in the current era, bride's level of education is the only robust predictor of the bride-price payment at the time of marriage. This in tandem with May's (1984:48) study from Zimbabwe who stated that, "Fathers demand unduly high amounts for educated daughters as a recompense for the money they have invested in educating their girls." Correspondingly, Mangena and Sambulo (2013:476) supported that, "An educated girl attracts more money for two reasons; it is a compensation for the money invested in her education and it is believed that she would be of more value to the husband than an uneducated one." However, some respondents argued against the idea, they explained that parents do educate male children as well.

Therefore, in concluding this part, findings of the study revealed that the practice of bride-price is not static but dynamic. It has been changing in line with the needs of the society. The dynamism of bride-price is in form of pricing which happens in monetary form or in kind. The research found that in the current era and more especially in the urban part of Mambwe land bride-price has been commercialised. It has been turned into a business venture. However, the study also found that, in Mambwe rural areas some parents are still following the traditional way of charging. In tandem with the theories that guided this research, the concepts of masculinity and femininity are dynamic just as the bride-price is dynamic. The more people develop in the understanding of gender issues the more the practice of bride-price is affected. As observed from the study that in old times the paying of bride-price was perceived as a way of honouring a bride's family by the groom's family. However, in recent times bride-price has changed to an extent of it being commercialised.

5.5 The Implications of Bride-Pricing on the Institution of Marriage among the Mambwe People

The findings of the study indicated that implications of bride-price among the Mambwe people have positive and negative effects on the institution of marriage. The effects are discussed in the subheadings below:

5.5.1 Positive Implications of Bride-Price on Marriages among the Mambwe People

a. Promotion of Respect and Honour in Marriage

Promoting respect and honour came out strongly during data collection as one of the positive implications of bride-price. Both men and women from FDGs and interviews viewed paying of bride-price as respect that a man and his family shows to the woman and her family. They argued in favor of bride-price that a man can only pay for a woman whom he respects and acknowledges as being valuable. They further proposed that honoring is only done to a person who has done something good or who is perceived to be the best in a particular manner. So when a man pays bride-price he honors the bride's parents for the care and love they showed in the upbringing of the woman. These results mirror the findings done by Lowes and Nunn (2017) who revealed that for the parents of the wife, the bride-price symbolizes respect, reward and honour.

The study findings further showed that a woman is respected and honoured for her good behaviour, and for being a best woman that a man considers to be the only woman who suits him for a wife. Men are also respected by a woman's family for respecting them and their daughter through payments. Theorizing these findings, bride-price as a way of showing respect and honour can be viewed as masculinity or femininity issue. When a woman is honoured and respected that implies femininity and when a man is applauded for paying bride-price that is masculinity.

b. Bride-Price as a Sign of Love Between the Bride and Groom

This study also found love to be one of the implications of bride payment. The informants stressed that even though love is relative in conceptualizing, there some parameters that are considered as ways in which love can be termed. In a relationship that exists between a man and a woman love is shown through various ways of which one of them is marrying each other. During marriage rites

one of the ways in which a man is perceived to love a woman is by paying for her. Most of the male participants revealed that loving each other in marriage is a responsibility of both a man and a woman. Responsibility is seen through obligations, of which one of the obligations in relation to the man is paying of bride-price. This finding seems to conform to Lowes and Nunn's (2017) findings who established that the bride-price is an official custom that expresses the love a husband has for his wife. This research further established that women feel loved when they are paid for, they feel valued. Therefore, from this study's findings one of the rationales for paying bride-price is the expression of love that men have towards women.

c. Bride-Price as a form of Unification and Solidification of Marriages and Families

Unification and solidification of marriages and families was one of the implications of bride payments that came out strongly during data collection. The participants pointed out that marriage is made of a man and a woman coming from two different families which were not relatives before. But the coming together of the two (a man and a woman) makes the two different families to become one family. The payment of bride-price is among other factors that acts as a rope that is used to tie the two families together in a cultural way. Fanala (2019) also considered bride-price to be a unifier of marriages and families when he noted that bride-price is seen as the strength of marriage because it brings together the families leading to acceptance.

Similarly, Ansell (2001) and Muthegheki *et al.*, (2012) noted, evidence suggests that the tradition of bride-price historically is believed to have beneficial consequences-gives formal recognition to marriages, maintains social control, construction of society identity, protects wives against possible abuse, stabilizes the partnership, promotes social cohesion and joins the two families together. However, findings from this study are contrary to Kressel *et al.* (1977) who argue in contention that bride-price is not a means of unifying and stabilizing marriages and families since it does not guarantee future co-operative behavior on the part of the bride or the two families.

5.5.2 Negative Implications of Bride-Price among the Mambwe People

The research found the following negative implications of bride-price discussed below:

d. Bride-Price as a Basis of Male Dominance and Exploitation of Women in Marriage

Most women in focus group discussions as well as in interviews explained that men tend to dominate in marriages claiming that they are the ones who pay for marrying the women. The findings revealed that bride-price payment in recent times has become a very serious gender issue with implications on gender relations in different socio-cultural contexts. As such, it has brought about male dominance as the culprit to gender equality and equity in marriages, manifests itself as female exploitation, and reduces rights and freedoms of women in marriages. Equally, Matope *et al* (2013) study found that paying of bride-price partly contributes to the exacerbation of domestic violence as men are said to use the high payment as a justification to oppress, exploit and dominate women.

In addition, this research revealed that some men tend to dominate in marriages because they perceive bride payment as buying. Some men see their wives as properties which they have bought. As alluded to in the previous chapter of data presentation, a female informant said that her husband considered her to be the most expensive property in the house. In an interview with one young married man, he responded that since in coming up with bride payment, parents do charge it means that they do sale their daughters. The interviewee reached the extent of explaining the definition of charging according to the dictionary of business and management in which a charge is defined as a legal interest in land or property created in favor of a creditor to ensure that the amount owing is paid off. The interview further argued that charging bride-price involves putting a price on what is charged; which in this case is, unfortunately a woman.

The Findings of this study mirror those of Chireshe and Chireshe's (2010) which showed that the payment of bride-price was making some husbands to see wives as their property to be used as they pleased, especially where bride-price was highly charged. Other male participants also explained that because of deterioration in social norms and morals most men especially young ones believe that the payment actually reduces the woman to an object of sale and hence commoditize her. From the theoretical perspective that guided this study, since only men are the

ones who pay, this can be termed as gender discrimination supporting masculinity and reducing femininity.

a. Bride-Price as a Basis for ‘Sexual Abused’ of Women in marriage

The research findings further showed that women are sexually abused in marriages. Traditionally, when a man pays bride-price it means that he is legally recognised as a husband. According to Mambwe marriage teachings a woman has no right to deny sexual intercourse to her husband unless she is sick or on her menstruation period. Most women who were the primary source of data lamented how most men tended to abuse women sexually on the pretext that they had paid bride-price. As supported by Meekers (1992) that bride-price common in South African marriages symbolizes the transfer of the right of the girl’s sexual and economic services to the husband. This is also what this current study found, when a man marries in a right way where even bride-price is paid he becomes in charge of sexual activities over a woman. A woman has to ensure that she satisfies her husband sexually and as a result women are sexually abused.

The same findings were noted to be happening in Uganda by Alupo (2004) who cited several instances where bride-price is a key factor leading to spousal abuse in marital relationships, posing great threats to the stability of marriages in Uganda. Also, Bishai and Grossbard in their 2006 study in Uganda indicated that bride-price inclines men to extra marital sexual relations and decreases such behaviours for women. The explanation is that, the payment of bride-price is viewed as a payment for the woman’s sexual faithfulness to the man. The logic is that, a man who buys a shirt is the only person entitled to wear that shirt but the fact that a man has bought a particular shirt does not take from him the freedom to wear other shirts.

In Ghana also, the same results came out from the study by Ngutor, *et al* (2015) who highlighted that the practice of bride-price appears to buy a wife as a product leaving women with limited control over their sexuality. These findings are related to the notions of masculinity and femininity. Fulfilling sexual pressure in men is one of the ways of proving manliness in a marriage, just as paying of bride-price is another way of fulfilling manliness. Honouring a husband by satisfying him in sexual intercourse is one of the ways of proving womanliness in a traditional set up.

b. Bride-price as an ‘Economic Burden’ on Men

The research findings also revealed that bride-price is in some instance an economic burden on men. It is a custom that a man has to pay either he likes it or not, either he has money or not. The findings revealed that some men suffer a lot for them to fulfil the tradition by paying off the charged amount. Because of bride-price some men get highly indebted just to pay for the bride. At the beginning of a family they are engulfed with a lot of debts a situation which leaves them in poverty thereby causing misunderstandings in the early days of marriage. Some male participants explained that maybe one of the reasons why some men tend to abuse their wives is because of the hardship which they go through in raising funds to pay as bride payment. Similarly, Silberschmidt (2016) from his study in Kenya found that girls are definitely regarded as sources of wealth, just as in Homer they are called “maidens who bring in cattle.”

c. Bride-Price as a Basis for ‘Loss of Respect’ Among Men

Loss of respect was one of the negative implications of bride-price. According to the findings from this study, loss of respect happens when a man fails to pay the price he has been charged by the woman’s family. From the findings, it was revealed that, some parents take their sons’ in-law to court for failing to pay bride-price so that the court can compel a man to pay. Taking a son in-law to court is disrespectful and can contribute to gender based violence in homes at the same time it can promote sexual abuse and male dominance in marriages. From the findings, sons’ in-law also tend to disrespect the parents in-law for taking them to court. Further, the research found that people in the community disrespect a man who fails to pay bride-price and castigate parents who take their sons in-law to court. In tandem, Nambozo (2014) stated that a man will never be respected if he fails to pay bride-price.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that people in the community laugh at parent who agrees to marry off their daughter if a groom has not paid bride-price. The community considers such parents to be desperate for the daughter’s marriage. Bride-price complicates marriage issues if at all a man fails to pay. This finding is in tandem with the masculinity concept, a man who fails to pay bride-price is perceived as not being a man, which is loss of respect (Nikki, 2009).

d. Bride-Price and the Limitation of Women's Decisions in Marriage

During data collection the research revealed that bride-price contributes to the limitation of women in decision making in marriages. The respondents in both FGD's and interviews bemoaned the limitation of women's decisions in marriage to be a result of bride-payment. Women participants expressed that men are always at the centre of making decisions as they claim to be the heads of houses. Men and women don't have equal power to decide. Men have overall power after paying for the wife. They (women) can never decide on their own, even in situations where their life is at risk. These findings are similar to that of Fuseini and Dodoo (2012) whose findings also revealed that the payment of bride-price deprives a woman autonomy in all aspects of her life, prevent her from full enjoyment of her rights and gender equality as their decisions are influenced by their husbands. The same findings were revealed from Platteau and Gaspart's (2007) studies in Senegal which indicated that bride-price contributes to alienation of women and transforms them into commodities or into their husband's slaves. They associate bride-price with expressions that show deep-seated frustrations and intense suffering.

The findings from the study on the negative implications of bride-price on marriages discussed above are in line with the notions of masculinities and femininity which determine the type of behaviour one is expected to exhibit in society if he or she is to be considered masculine or feminine. Expectations about masculinity include being violent, dominant, highly interested in sexual pleasure, and paying bride-price in full. On the contrary, those who do not exhibit such behaviours or show the opposite are considered to be feminine (Connell 1999).

5.6 Reflections of the theory that guided this study (Gender, Masculinity and Femininity)

As revealed from the study, bride-price is highly influenced by the notions of masculinity, femininity and highly gendered in nature. Just as gender is a socially and culturally inclined, bride-price is also social and culturally inclined. Gender is an institution that establishes patterns of expectations for individuals, orders the social processes of everyday life, is built into the major social organisation of society, such as the economy, ideology, family and politics and is also an entity in and of itself (Lorber, 1995). From this study's findings, bride-price constitutes situations where men are trying to assert their influence and power over women in order to reinforce their feelings of "total manhood" in marriages. The findings also revealed a process where most of the

women were trying to fulfil the gender roles and expectations as have been socialized over time. Thus, women would suffer in various ways such as sexual abuse, male dominance and limited decision making. The above issues were explored by investigating the civic perspective of the nature and scope, the significance, changing trends and implications of bride-price.

5.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the findings of the study as presented in this chapter. This study brought out issues to do with the nature and scope of bride-price. The chapter also discussed the meaning of bride-price, the process, history and prevalence. It has also looked at the significance, changing trends and implications according to the findings from the field, and by relating to other scholars. The chapter ended with a reflection on the theory that guided the study. The next chapter presents the overall conclusion of the study and provides recommendations as well as suggestions for further researches.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

This chapter provides the conclusion of the study and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study. It must be highlighted that the main objective of this study was to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala District of Northern Province from a civic perspective. The chapter will end by looking at the suggestions for future studies.

6.2 Conclusion

The first objective of this study was to investigate the nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Mbala District. From the findings, bride-price is the payment that is made to validate or legitimize/solemnize marriages among the Mambwe people. Payment of bride-price can be made in monetary form or in kind, preferably a cow. The general picture from the study revealed that bride-price is a historically and culturally rooted practice, and it is a civically sound practice. Bride-price is a widely accepted practice among both men and women participants. The second objective investigated the significance of bride-price among the Mambwe people. Significantly, bride-price is a cultural norm when a man pays bride-price he respects and upholds his culture. From the findings bride-price is significant in that it promotes peace of mind and security on the part of the woman in the institution of marriage. The researcher discovered that the issue of bride-price is a controversial one. It remains an important traditional cultural practice and many people consider it to be valuable.

Further, the study in-line with the third objective explored the changing trends in bride-pricing among the Mambwe people. The researcher noted from the research findings that bride-price has been changing from time to time. Because of modernization the practice has been influenced by social, economic and cultural changes and its historical integrity, benefits and its significance have been affected negatively. The fourth and last objective was to describe the implications of bride-pricing on the institution of marriage among the Mambwe people. The study revealed a number of positive implications that included, sign of respect and honour, sign of love and act as a unifier and solidification of marriages. Negatively, bride-price payment was linked to be among the causes

and symptoms of gender inequality in households. As such, bride-price from the study was viewed as one of the factors that is contributing to male dominance in marriages, women sexual abuse in marriages, limited decision making for women and economic burden on the part of men. All in all, bride-price is a civic practice that is widely accepted and respected among the Mambwe people.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made to the Government of the Republic of Zambia and to various institutions that promote civic issues such as gender equality and cultural identity.

1. Professional marriage counsellors with the help of the government and civil society organisations to set up conferences for marriage couples and for those intending to marry. In the conferences participants should be taught the cultural significance of bride-price.
2. Civil society organisations such as the church working in collaboration with traditional authorities to promote awareness and advising their subjects on serious dangers of high bride-price on marital stability.
3. The government in collaboration with traditional leaders should call for the abolition of the practice of refunding bride-price before dissolving problematic marriages (more especially in a childless marriage).
4. Government through parliament and the Ministry of Justice in consultation with traditional leaders and civil society organisations should come up with a law to curtail the culture of increasing bride-price. This can be done by coming up with a minimum and maximum amount of money or materials that should be fixed for payment as bride-price in Zambia, no matter the socio-economic status of the bride or groom.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

This study brought a lot of insights that prompted questions that require further researches. The following are suggestions for further researches:

1. Similar studies should be done on various tribes in Zambia so as to generalize the nature and scope of bride-price in Zambia.

2. A study should be undertaken to compare and contrast the nature and scope of bride-price between rural and urban areas of Zambia.
3. A study should be undertaken to compare the dynamism on the commercialization of bride-price in Zambia.
4. Further research should be conducted on the relationship between bride-price and marital stability.

6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the conclusion of the study. This chapter has also presented the recommendations that have been coined from what the study has established. The chapter has finally presented suggestions for further studies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Schedule/Guide for marriage counsellors and village headmen/women.

Date.....

Time.....

Introduction

My name is Musonda Francis. I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia carrying out a research on the *Nature and Scope of Bride-Price among the Mambwe people of Zamia's Mbala District of Northern Province*. For this purpose, you have been selected as one of my key informants to help me with information on this subject matter. The information you will provide will be strictly confidential and it will be used for academic purposes only. You are being requested to be as open and sincere as possible in the answering the questions. Your participation in the research is also voluntary.

Part A: demographic information

Sex of the respondent

Age, [] below 50, 50 and above []

Highest level of education

Occupation

Which church do you belong to?

What tribe are you?

Are you married?

How long have you been married?

How long have you been serving as a marriage counsellor/headman or woman?

Part B: Nature and scope of bride-price

1. What do you understand by the term bride-price?
2. Is it fine to pay bride-price for a lady who has had a child before? Give a reason to your response.
3. In your culture is bride-price paid in monetary form or in kind?
4. Who determines the value to pay as bride-price?
5. When is bride-price paid?

Part C: Significance of bride-price

6. Does bride-price have any significance in marriage?
7. Why do men pay bride-price?
8. What do men expect from their wives when they pay bride-price?
9. What is the attitude of married women towards the payment of bride-price?
10. What is the expectation of the in-laws when bride-price is paid?

Part D: Changing trends

11. What factors were considered in deciding the payment of bride-price among families in Mambwe traditional setup?
12. What factors are considered in deciding the payment of bride-price among Mambwe families in Modern setup?
13. What mode of payment of bride-price were used in marriage among couples in traditional setup?
14. What mode of payment of bride-price are used in marriage among couples in modern setup?
15. What are some of the notable changes in bride pricing over the years among the Mambwe people?

Part E: Implications of bride-price

16. Do the payment of bride-price disadvantage men?
17. What challenges do men face in marriage due to the payment of bride-price?
18. Do the payment of bride-price disadvantage women?
19. What challenges do women face in marriage due to the payment of bride-price?

20. Have you ever handled any serious cases related to bride-price among marriage couples?
21. What are your views on the payment of bride-price, in relations to its advantages and disadvantages?

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule/Guide for married men and women.

Date.....

Time.....

Introduction

My name is Musonda Francis. I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia carrying out a research on the *Nature and Scope of Bride-Price among the Mambwe people of Zamia's Mbala District of Northern Province*. For this purpose, you have been selected as one of my key informants to help me with information on this subject matter. The information you will provide will be strictly confidential and it will be used for academic purposes only. You are being requested to be as open and sincere as possible in the answering the questions. Your participation in the research is also voluntary.

Part A: demographic information

Sex of the respondent

Age, [] below 50, 50 and above []

Highest level of education

Occupation

Which church do you belong to?

What tribe are you?

Are you married?

How long have you been married?

Part B: Nature and scope of bride-price

1. What do you understand by the term bride-price?
2. Is it fine to pay bride-price for a lady who has had a child before? Give a reason to your response.
3. In your culture is bride-price paid in monetary form or in kind?
4. Who determines the value to pay as bride-price?
5. When is bride-price paid?

Part C: Significance of bride-price

6. Does bride-price have any significance in marriage?
7. Why do men pay bride-price?
8. What do men expect from their wives when they pay bride-price?
9. What is the attitude of married women towards the payment of bride-price?
10. What is the expectation of the in-laws when bride-price is paid?

Part D: Changing trends

11. What factors were considered in deciding the payment of bride-price among families in Mambwe traditional setup?
12. What factors are considered in deciding the payment of bride-price among Mambwe families in Modern setup?
13. What mode of payment of bride-price were used in marriage among couples in traditional setup?
14. What mode of payment of bride-price are used in marriage among couples in modern setup?
15. What are some of the notable changes in bride pricing over the years among the Mambwe people?

Part E: Implications of bride-price

16. Do the payment of bride-price disadvantage men?
17. What challenges do men face in marriage due to the payment of bride-price?
18. Do the payment of bride-price disadvantage women?
19. What challenges do women face in marriage due to the payment of bride-price?

20. Have you ever handled any serious cases related to bride-price among marriage couples?
21. What are your views on the payment of bride-price, in relations to its advantages and disadvantages?

Appendix 3: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Area.....

Date.....

Number of participants.....

Time Started..... Time Finished.....

Good morning/Afternoon,

My name is Musonda Francis. I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia carrying out a research on the *Nature and Scope of Bride-Price among the Mambwe people of Zamia's Mbala District of Northern Province*. For this purpose, you have been selected as one of my key informants to help me with information on this subject matter. The information you will provide will be strictly confidential and it will be used for academic purposes only. You are being requested to be as open and sincere as possible in the answering the questions. Your participation in the research is also voluntary.

Part A: Nature and scope of bride-price

1. What do you understand by the term bride-price?
2. Is it fine to pay bride-price for a lady who has had a child before? Give a reason to your response.
3. In your culture is bride-price paid in monetary form or in kind?
4. Who determines the value to pay as bride-price?
5. When is bride-price paid?

Part B: Significance of bride-price

6. Does bride-price have any significance in marriage?
7. Why do men pay bride-price?
8. What do men expect from their wives when they pay bride-price?
9. What is the attitude of married women towards the payment of bride-price?
10. What is the expectation of the in-laws when bride-price is paid?

Part C: Changing trends

11. What factors were considered in deciding the payment of bride-price among families in Mambwe traditional setup?
12. What factors are considered in deciding the payment of bride-price among Mambwe families in Morden setup?
13. What mode of payment of bride-price were used in marriage among couples in traditional setup?
14. What mode of payment of bride-price are used in marriage among couples in modern setup?
15. What are some of the notable changes in pride pricing over the years among the Mambwe people?

Part D: Implications of bride-price

16. Do the payment of bride-price disadvantage men?
17. What challenges do men face in marriage due to the payment of bride-price?
18. Do the payment of bride-price disadvantage women?
19. What challenges do women face in marriage due to the payment of bride-price?
20. What are your views on the payment of bride-price, in relations to its advantages and disadvantages?

Appendix 4: Letter of Approval



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
Institute of Distance Education

Telephone: 26021-1-291777-78 Ext. 3500/ 0978772249
Telegrams: UNZA LUSAKA
E-mail: director-ide@unza.zm

P.O. Box 32879
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

6th May, 2020

Dear Francis Musonda,

RE: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The IDE Postgraduate Studies Committee has approved your research proposal with moderate corrections and these have to be attended to on account of the comments you received (Francis Musonda, student # 19000521, Master of Education in Civic Education, proposed topic: "The nature and scope of bride-price among the Mambwe people of Zambia's Mbala district of Northern Zambia").

You are therefore required to contact your supervisor to guide you on the next course of action (including data collection) for your proposed research.

The Committee has every confidence that you will succeed in your work and complete your studies on time.

Yours sincerely

Prof. B. Namangala (PhD)
DIRECTOR
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

CC:
Assistant Director PG, IDE
Programme Coordinator, DPhil
Dr F Hambulo (Supervisor)