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**Abstract:** This paper interrogates the societal circumstances that surround the names that were given to selected primary and secondary schools. The study, therefore, seeks to identify and reveal the culture and history embedded in these names by looking at the significance of the naming of twelve government schools in the Kabwe District of Central Province from a socio-onomastic point of view. The sample schools have full names of people, that is, first and surname. A qualitative case study design was chosen to guide the study. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews, followed by telephonic interviews and document analysis were used to collect data from twelve participants who represented the twelve sample schools. A phenomenological theoretical locale was adopted to underpin the study. The study shows that human beings have a deep-rooted need to name things influenced by particular phenomena and researchers have long recognized that there is much power in naming things. The study also reveals that names are given to human beings, things, and places to identify, symbolize, refer to, describe, simplify, and organize. The study also reveals that before the written alphabet was developed, and as far back as oral history existed, humans felt duty-bound to name things, people, and even weather patterns. The study further shows that the naming practice goes beyond cultures and religions, geographies, and periods, from primitive tribes to the present day. Therefore, the names are a historical record that carries some aspects of a people's way of life which include their history, beliefs, and customs among others.

**Keywords:** *Beliefs, culture, historical record, naming, phenomenon, Zambia*

## 1. Introduction

Onomastic is the study of names and is associated with linguistics, history, anthropology, sociology, physiology, and many other fields. This paper focuses on the linguistic aspect of onomastic. The study of names is important for human existence especially since people value culture, language, and communication. According to crystal (1987), Onomastic is a branch of semantics that studies the etymology of proper nouns including their form and use. Onomastic can be further sub-divided into three sub-categories namely; anthroponomastic, the study of personal names; toponomastic, the study of names of places; and ethnonym, the study of the names of various ethnic groups (Mensah et al., 2018). This paper concerns itself with the study of names of places, in this case primary and secondary schools in Kabwe hence falls under what is called toponomastic.

It is envisaged that words are the chief media of human communication, and, as the diversity of language clearly shows, the link involved between words and what they signify cannot be a natural one. Words and sentences are like symbols- they point beyond themselves; they mean something. Smoke means fire, and the pierced heart means love (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2015). Meaning is what a word conveys, signifies, expresses and its inner and psychological importance. Gerba (2014) opines that the meaning of a place such as a school is the idea of the word or the action. Meaning is the idea a person wants to express by using words, and signs; the thing one intends to

convey especially by language. Meaning can also be described as what a sender of information wants to express or convey in their message to a receiver of information, and what a receiver deduces from the given context (European Scientific Journal, 2013). This paper is dedicated to the meanings conveyed by names of schools with surnames in kabwe district where Broken Hillman was discovered.

It is envisaged that human beings have a deep-rooted need to name things influenced by particular phenomena and researchers have long recognized that there is much power in naming things. The names are given to human beings, things, and places to identify, symbolize, refer to, describe, simplify, and organize. Before the written alphabet was developed, and as far back as oral history existed, humans felt duty-bound to name things, people, and even weather patterns. It can be argued that the naming practice goes beyond cultures and religions, geographies and time periods, from primitive tribes to the present day. This shows that names are a historical record that carries some aspects of a people's way of life which include their history, beliefs, and customs among others.

Literature shows that many studies have been conducted on personal naming patterns of people. For example, A morpho-semantic analysis of the Kamue personal names (Ngamsa et al, 2013), and A socio-cultural and linguistic analysis of postcolonial Christian naming practices in Zimbabwe (Mashiri et al, 2013). However, to the best knowledge of the researchers, no study has been conducted to ascertain a socio-onomastic analysis of names of schools, precisely in Kabwe district in Zambia. Therefore, this study interrogates the origin and social implicature of the names of primary and secondary schools especially those with first and surnames. The paper progresses as follows: introduction, literature review, theoretical locale, methodology, results and discussion and conclusion.

## 2. Literature Review

Literature shows that research has been conducted on names of places such as, Denotative meanings of names given to businesses in Chogoria Town: A pragmatic Analysis (Kinegeni and Atieno, 2019); a study of credit union names (Boyd and Collins, 2008); and naming patterns of cemeteries (Tarpley, 2006). On the other hand, very few studies have been conducted in Zambia on names such as the pragmatics and semantics of personal nouns in Namwanga (Lungu, 2020). This scenario has necessitated the present study to document the socio-onomastic analysis of schools with surnames in Kabwe, Zambia.

Names function as channels of information, especially on society's attitudes or observations towards the named (Mapara, Mutasa and Nyota, 2009). Moreover, for one to appreciate these names there is a need to have good knowledge of the language in which the name is being communicated. Moreover, various types of personal names do not exist in isolation. There is a close relationship between society and the language in which personal names are found, as names form an important part of a language. Nicolaisen (1976) affirms that the acquisition of a language is another human trait that has given him [man] the tool with which to name.

According to Raper (1987:17), 'Names are an integral part of a language, and a primary function of a language is to communicate. It would therefore seem to be unreasonable to assume that names have no meaning at all.' Like any other linguistic item, personal names are found in a language. Koopman (1990) points out that the name-forming process is a derivational one as all names are derived from a primary source in a language. Despite names being found in a language, they do not

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only function as linguistic items. Hence, from this perspective, it can be deduced that personal naming is not simply a linguistic matter, but a social and a psychological matter which is demonstrated by various naming practices adopted by people from various cultural and religious backgrounds. Mazrui (2002) says speakers of different languages view the world in different ways. Like the other languages of the world, Namwanga is a language that has rich cultural and traditional values, and it is through the naming that some of the values are expressed and conveyed.

Naming is one of the most important symbols of identity in people's lives and it varies from one society or community to another, in that it portrays the cultural and traditional values embedded in the particular society, it also signifies essential events, circumstances, experiences, expectations that surround the entire family. Mbiti (1990; 115) adds that "almost all African names are rooted in culture and history, names restore identity. A name has an impact on the life of an individual and his or her family.

Mathangwane and Gardner (1998), in their study of personal names in Botswana, found that names play an important role in conveying cultural values and traditions. It is from this perspective that Koopman (1989:34) provides these patterns of personal names among the AmaZulu: names referring to the structure of the family, names referring to the role of God in the birth, names referring to the perceived relationship between parents and children, names referring to the circumstances of the parents, names referring to the wider clan. The information provided in previous studies on naming patterns will add value to the current study, regardless of it being done in a different language, but one aspect of naming patterns that is names referring to the structure of the family was not discussed in the current study.

Dickens (1985) documented Zulu personal names and suggests that the following patterns are followed when personal names are selected in Zulu society: a synoptic history of the circumstances surrounding the child's birth, the emotions related to the birth, the family's attitude to the birth, the place where he or she was born, his position in the family, the time he was born, the parents' spiritual attitudes, his appearance at birth, his parent's wishes for him, the parents' social expectations, the country's situation at the time of his birth or the clan into which he was born from. Although these two studies seem to be similar to the current study, this study looks at the personal naming patterns in a different language reflecting the circumstances of the family of the name giver.

Suzman (1994), in her study of Zulu personal naming practices, concurs with Dickens (1985) on the factors that influence the choice of personal names: These names document several significant events in the family's history, their happiness at having firstborn, a boy and then a girl, their aspirations for continuing the family line, problems in the marriage, the mother's uncomfortable pregnancy and the birth of a child relatively late in life. Moreover, it is these factors that determine the patterns into which a particular name can be categorized.

Mandende (2009), who conducted a study on Tshivenda personal names, says that the patterns that personal names in most African societies follow have been divided into different patterns or categories these are; those reflecting traditional beliefs and meanings, cultural practices, ancestry, reincarnation and commemoration, derogation (to demean) and name changes or substitutions. The study also demonstrated how the meanings in the morphological composition of personal names can convey messages from and experiences of the name-giver and the community at large. Africans, Vhavenda in particular, arrange and rearrange different morphemes from different word categories in the expression of their deepest feelings. It was revealed that many African personal names, Tshivenda personal names in particular, point to the circumstances of the family or community at a particular time in their lives.

In addition, Neethling (2007) states that the study of personal naming or names of people, known as anthroponymy, is often dictated by an existing tradition or convention of name-giving in any given culture or community. Once this tradition has taken root, most members belonging to that particular culture or community will tend to stay within the general parameters. Surnames or family names are, generally speaking, hereditary, and hence remain stable over long periods. This is perhaps true for most communities. First names, by contrast, are not as stable, and it is in this area that name-givers at times ‘digress’ from the convention, or even “experiment” when it comes to the choice of a name. Hereditary aspects may play a role here too, such as patronymics, for example, where the father or grandfather of a child might be commemorated through naming.

### 3. Theoretical Locale

This paper is underpinned by a phenomenological approach. The main proponent of this theory Husserl (1963) defines phenomenology as the descriptive, non-reductive science of whatever appears, in the manner of its appearing. This phenomenon can be in the subjective and inter-subjective life of consciousness. According to the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (2013), “The discipline of phenomenology may be defined initially as the study of structures of experience, of consciousness. Phenomenology is the study of “phenomena”; appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view.” This theoretical underpinning is immense and befitting in this study because this is the exact expectation of interpretations of the prevailing phenomena concerning the names of primary and secondary schools in Kabwe district which came into existence due to experiences of inhabitants of the places or forruners of the schools. Husserl (1963) postulates that the intentional theory of consciousness proposes that ‘being’ and ‘meaning’ are immersed in each other. Therefore, the phenomenological approach emphasizes a fundamental reading of the literary work without any effect from the outside. This is in line with the current study on socio-onomastic where the significance of the school names with surnames are only attributed to what lead to their establishment so that the owners of the proper nouns are remembered in the generations to come.

The phenomenological approach first came into being in the early years of the 20th century. The phenomenological theory regards the work of art as a mediator between the consciousness of the author and the reader. Phenomenology is the philosophical study of structures of experience and consciousness. The phenomenological approach originated in ancient times, but major works began with Husserl. Fochtman (2008) states that the roots of phenomenology are found in the epoch of Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle as a philosophy of human existence. This is in tandem with the current study that aims to excavate the lived experiences of the owners of the proper nouns which led to naming of the twelve schools under study. Eagleton indicates that the modern founder of phenomenology is the German Philosopher Husserl (1963) and says, “Husserl, like his philosopher predecessor Rene’ Descartes, started on his hunt for certainty by provisionally rejecting what he called the ‘natural attitude’ – the commonsensical person –the in-the-street belief that objects existed independently of ourselves in the external world and that our information about them was generally reliable. Such an attitude merely took the possibility of knowledge for granted, whereas it was this, precisely, which was in question” (Eagleton, 1983:55).

It can be argued that Husserl (1963) is a serious, difficult (often inaccessible) thinker, yet his work exhibits extraordinary originality, range, depth, vitality, and relevance. His unique contribution to phenomenology was highly influential in twentieth-century European philosophy. The scholars of

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the present study argue that Husserl’s phenomenology is not practical since there is very little place for language in his approach. However, Husserl’s celebrated pupil Heidegger (1982) transformed the theory to make it practical and applicable for the analysis of language matters such as anthropology, sociolinguistics and onomastic in the current paper and called it interpretive-hermeneutic phenomenology. This is befitting in the present study on socio-onomastic analysis of names of schools in Kabwe where history and culture requires to be interpreted to fulfil Husserl’s proposed theory which advocates for ‘being’ and ‘meaning.’

#### 4. Methods and Approaches

This was a qualitative study that was non-numerical and subjective (Brink & Wood, 1998; Siame, 2022b). Cavana, et al., (2001) that ‘qualitative research reveals people’s values, interpretative schemes, mind maps, belief systems and rules of living so that respondent’s reality can be understood. Jackson (1995) adds that qualitative research does not concern itself with a representative sample but instead, it emphasizes careful and detailed descriptions of social practices in an attempt to understand how the participants experience and explain their world. It takes a constructivist perspective which emphasizes that knowledge is active and creative (Namanji & Ssekya, 2012; Siame, 2022a).

The research was conducted in the Central province of Zambia, in particular, Kabwe District. Primary data were collected using elicitation or interview methods. The document analysis method was adopted during the collection and analysis of secondary data which were used to justify the primary data (Chaleunvong, 2009; Siame, 2023). The study had a sample size of 12 primary and secondary schools in the Kabwe district. 12 respondents were considered for this study because Sandelowski (1995) advises, ‘...the sample sizes in qualitative research should not be so small that it is difficult to achieve saturation. At the same time, the sample should not be too large that it is difficult to make a deep, case-oriented analysis.’ Creswell (1998) agrees with Sandelowski by recommending interviews with up to 10 people in phenomenological research as the case with the present study. The 12 respondents who took part in the current study as earlier indicated were picked using purposive sampling. Bernard (2002), and Lewis & Sheppard (2006) in Tongco (2007) describe purposive sampling or judgment sampling as “The deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses. It is a nonrandom technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information under knowledge or experience.” This method, purposive (non-random) sampling, signifies a series of strategic choices about with whom, where, and how one does one’s research (Palys 2008; Sahaya, 2017). This method was specifically chosen because it is a deliberate choice of the researcher to sample the participants in the 12 schools of Central Zambia. Patton (1990) adds that purposive sampling is the most common method of sampling in qualitative research where individuals, groups, and settings are considered for selection if they are ‘informant rich’. In the present study, traditional leaders, freedom fighters, and other gatekeepers were purposively selected as they were considered ‘informant rich.’

As far as instrumentation was concerned, the present study used an interview guide to obtain information from the respondents. The first part of the interview guide was used to collect respondents’ characteristics or background information such as age, gender, and occupation. The last part of the interview was designed to be more open-ended and offer more variation to the individual answers given on the socio-onomastic of the selected schools.

The respondents were given a brief explanation of the aim of the study. Before we engaged participants in face-to-face in-depth interviews, ethical issues were taken into account. Interviewees were made aware of informed consent, freedom to withdraw, deception, protection from physical and psychological harm, confidentiality, anonymity, and academic integrity.

Data analysis went hand in hand with data collection (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Data were analyzed thematically using descriptive and analytical skills (Siame et al., 2023).

## **5. Results and Discussion**

### **5.1 Angelina Tembo Girls' Secondary School**

Angelina Tembo Girls' Secondary School is located in Kabwe's Bwacha township in Central Province. The school is Grant-aided run by the Little Servants of Mary Immaculate Sisters of Catholic Church. The school was opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1965 as a Catholic Primary School under the auspice of the Little Servants of Mary Immaculate Sisters with sister Betch Getrude as the first Headteacher.

In 1966, one of the Little Servants of Mary Immaculate Sisters by the name of Angelina Tembo died. This prompted the sisters to name Bwacha Girls' Primary School in her honour. In August 1966, the school changed its name to Angelina Tembo Girls' Primary School.

Sister Angelina Tembo was born on 10<sup>th</sup> May, 1933 at Chilikusha village, Chief Mbalima, Luangwa district. She died of cancer of the intestines at Kasisi Convent on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 1966. In 1975, the government took over the running of the school until 25<sup>th</sup> January, 1996 when it was handed back to the Little Servants of Mary Immaculate Sisters.

### **5.2 Danford Chirwa Secondary School**

Danford Chirwa Secondary school was founded in Katondo area of Kabwe district. It was first opened as a community school and it remained so for 58 years. Considering the population and high demand for education, the school moved to Bwacha area in the northern part of the district, 4.7 km away from the town center. First, it was at the present day Ben Kapufi Primary School and it was named as Bwacha A. The school hosted Grade 1-4 called Standard 1-4 by then.

As time went on, practitioners saw that there was need for the continuation of education, hence, they decided to open another school to host standards 5-7 and came to be known as Bwacha B. With the change of government policies, in 1955 Bwacha B was turned into a primary school. After independence, the school was named after a freedom fighter, Mr Danford Chirwa who was the chairperson for UNIP representing Bwacha Constituency.

### **5.3 David Ramushu Primary School**

The school was named after Reverend (Rev.) David Ramushu, in remembrance of his contributions in building schools, health centres and Methodists (now UCZ) churches. Rev. Ramushu was born in South Africa in 1908. He got his education in Zimbabwe where he completed his Standard Six. In 1929, he completed his primary school teaching course and came to Zambia. From 1929 to 1937, he taught at Chipembi Co-education School. Later he was appointed as a manager of schools in Kabwe district. He was also in charge of building schools and handling finances. The schools he built include Mitshede Primary School in Mukobeko area, Munyama Primary School, Chikonkomene Primary School, Imansa Primary School, Chipepo Primary School and Chapupa Primary School. The

churches he constructed include St Peter's UCZ in the Mine area, St John's UCZ in Ngungu township, Mukobeko UCZ. It should be emphasized that the above named churches were formerly called Methodist churches until 1965 when the name changed to UCZ.

In 1937, Rev David Ramushu went back to Southern Rhodesia to study Theology at Epworth Mission. When he came back after three years, he was sent to different areas to serve as reverend. The places he worked included Copperbelt at Mindolo Mission, Masuku in Choma in Southern Province and Kabwe town. In this period, he continued building schools, churches and health centres. In 1959, he was sent to Nanzhila Mission in Namwala district to continue his work. While at Nanzhila Mission, he developed cancer of the lungs and was therefore transferred to Kabwe General Hospital where he died. He was buried at Broken Hill Cemetery in 1961.

#### 5.4 Raphael Kombe Girls' Secondary School

Raphael Kombe was a Zambian politician and freedom fighter. In 1951, he was part of the leadership team of the first native political party of Zambia 'the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress', which was founded by Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula in 1948. The school was named after Kombe in honour of his immense contribution to the political development of the Northern Rhodesia African national Congress Party. The school which started as co-sex primary school has been upgraded to a girls' secondary school. Todate, Raphael Kombe is remembered a a hero freedom fighter who contributed to Zambian's attainment of independence in 1964.

#### 5.5 St. Dominic Savio Secondary School

The school was initially known as Don Bosco Secondary School, a name given by the then School Manager, Fr Chris Kunda who was one of the Provincial Development Officer (PDO) on the 10th of August, 2020 in honor of the pillar of the Salesian community Don John Bosco.

On 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2020, the government requested the name to be changed as it was the same with another school in Kabwe urban district. The provincial council with the Planning and Development Office from Catholic secretariat together with Fr Gabriel Mwenya who was the then school manager helped to re-name the school as St Dominic Savio Secondary School in honour of an Italian student Don John Bosco of Salesians who died on 9th March, 1857. It is envisaged that Don John Bosco as a pillar of the Salesian community generously contributed to the establishment of the named pillar and is highly remembered in the Catholic community both in Zambia and Italy.

### 6. Conclusion

It can be concluded that human beings have a deep-rooted need to name things influenced by particular phenomena. Researchers have long recognized that there is much power in naming things. The names are given to human beings, things, and places to identify, symbolize, refer to, describe, simplify, and organize. Before the written alphabet was developed, and as far back as oral history existed, humans felt duty-bound to name things, people, and even weather patterns. The naming practice goes beyond cultures and religions, geographies, and periods, from primitive tribes to the present day. Finally, in this study, researchers conclude that names are a historical record that carries some aspects of a people's way of life which include their history, beliefs, and customs among others.

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