

Original Article

A Socio-onomastic Analysis of the Selected School Names in Kabwe District in Zambia

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Abstract: This essay examines the social context around the names assigned to particular Zambian primary and secondary schools. Therefore, by examining the significance of naming five government schools in the Kabwe District of Central Province from a socio-onomastic point of view, the study aims to discover and reveal the culture and history buried in these names. Everyone's entire name, including first and last name, is available for the sample schools. To direct the investigation, a qualitative case study design was selected. The study employed semi-structured in-person interviews, telephone interviews, document analysis, and participant observation to gather data from ten individuals who were representative of the five sample schools. To support the investigation, a phenomenological theoretical region was chosen. The study demonstrates how humans have a deep-seated urge to give names to objects that are influenced by specific processes, and academics have long understood that names have great power. The study also shows that names are given to objects, places, and people in order to simplify, organise, identify, symbolise, and describe them. The study also shows that humans felt obligated to name objects, people, and even weather patterns long before the written alphabet was invented, dating back to the time of oral history. The study also demonstrates how naming practices transcend nations, religions, historical periods, and geographical locations, extending from prehistoric tribes to the modern era. As a result, the names serve as a historical document that captures elements of a people's culture, including its history, beliefs, and customs.

Keywords: Beliefs, Culture, Historical Record, Naming, Phenomenon, Zambia.

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of names, or onomastics, is related to numerous academic disciplines, including physiology, sociology, anthropology, history, and linguistics. The language component of onomastic is the main topic of this essay. Name studies is vital to human existence, particularly in light of the importance of culture, language, and communication. Onomastics is a field of semantics that focuses on the etymology of proper nouns, including their usage and form, according to Crystal (1987). Three subcategories fall under the umbrella of onomastic research: anthroponomastic, which studies human names; toponomastic, which studies place names; and ethnonym, which studies the names of different ethnic groups (Mensah et al., 2018). This paper falls under the category of toponomastic research because it examines place names; specifically, it focuses on elementary and secondary schools in Kabwe.

It is important to remember that words are the primary means of human communication. The diversity of languages demonstrates that there cannot be a natural connection between words and their meanings. Similar to symbols, words and sentences have meaning and point beyond themselves. A pierced heart represents love, while smoke denotes fire (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2015). Meaning is the inner and psychological significance of a word, as well as what it reveals, signifies, and expresses. According to Gerba (2014), the concept or action of a place, like a school, determines its meaning. Meaning is an individual's intention to communicate a message, particularly through language, through signs and words. Another way to define meaning is as what the sender of the information wishes to say or transmit to the recipient of the information, as well as what the recipient infers from the context (European Scientific Journal, 2013). This essay focuses on the messages that the surnames of the schools in the Kabwe district, where Broken Hillman was found, convey.

Researchers have long known that naming has great power, and it is believed that humans have a deep-seated desire to give names to objects that are influenced by specific processes. To identify, symbolise, refer to, characterise, simplify, and organise, names are given to objects, locations, and people. People felt obligated to give names to objects, people, and even weather patterns even before the writing alphabet was invented and oral history predates written history. One may claim that naming practices transcend civilizations, religions, historical periods, and geographical locations, extending from prehistoric tribes to the modern era. This demonstrates how names are a historical document that include information about a people's history, beliefs, and customs, among other things.



The body of literature demonstrates the wide range of research done on people's individualised naming practices. A socio-cultural and linguistic analysis of postcolonial Christian naming practices in Zimbabwe (Mashiri et al., 2013) and a morpho-semantic analysis of the Kamue personal names (Ngamsa et al., 2013) are two examples. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, no research has been done to determine a socio-onomastic analysis of school names, specifically in Zambia's Kabwe area. The origins and social connotations of primary and secondary school names, particularly those incorporating first and surnames, are thus examined in this study. The introduction, literature review, theoretical setting, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion are the order in which the work proceeds.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reveals that studies on place names have been carried out, including naming patterns of cemeteries (Tarpley, 2006), a study of credit union names (Boyd and Collins, 2008), and Denotative meanings of names given to enterprises in Chogoria Town: A pragmatic analysis (Kinegeni and Atieno, 2019). However, very little research on names, such as the pragmatics and semantics of personal nouns in Namwanga, has been done in Zambia (Lungu, 2020). This situation made the current study necessary in order to record the socio-onomastic analysis of schools in Kabwe, Zambia, that had surnames.

Names serve as informational conduits, particularly regarding societal perceptions or observations of the named (Mapara, Mutasa, and Nyota, 2009). Furthermore, having a solid command of the language used to convey these names is necessary in order to appreciate them. Furthermore, different kinds of personal names are not isolated from one another. Given that names are an integral component of a language, there is a close tie between society and the language that contains personal names. According to Nicolaisen (1976), learning a language is another characteristic of humans that has given them the ability to name things.

"Names are an integral part of a language, and a language's primary function is to communicate," asserts Raper (1987:17). Therefore, it would appear illogical to conclude that names have no significance at all. Personal names are part of a language, just like anything else. According to Koopman (1990), all names originate from a primary source inside a language, indicating that the process of producing a name is derivational. Even while names are linguistic objects, they serve other purposes as well. Therefore, from this angle, it can be inferred that personal naming is a social and psychological issue as well as a linguistic one, as seen by the diverse naming customs that individuals from different cultural and religious backgrounds embrace. Language speakers have diverse perspectives on the world, according to Mazrui (2002). Namwanga is a language with rich cultural and traditional values, just like other languages spoken throughout the world. Some of these values are articulated and communicated through the naming.

One of the most significant identity markers in people's lives is their name, which varies depending on the community or culture. It represents the customs and values that are inherent in that community as well as significant occasions, situations, experiences, and expectations that affect the entire family. "Nearly all African names are rooted in culture and history, names restore identity," continues Mbiti (1990; 115). A person's and their family's lives are impacted by their name.

In their examination of personal names in Botswana, Mathangwane and Gardner (1998) discovered that names are significant symbols of cultural norms and values. From this vantage point, Koopman (1989:34) presents the following patterns of AmaZulu personal names: names that allude to the family structure, names that emphasise the role of God in conception, names that reflect the perceived bond between parents and children, names that reflect the parents' circumstances, and names that refer to the larger clan. Despite being conducted in a foreign language, the information from earlier research on naming patterns will benefit the current study. However, one aspect of naming patterns—names that refer to the family structure—was not included in the current study.

According to Dickens (1985), who documented Zulu personal names, the following patterns are observed when choosing a name for a child in Zulu society: a summary of the events leading up to the child's birth, the feelings associated with the birth, the family's attitude towards the birth, the location of the birth, the child's position within the family, the time of the birth, the parents' spiritual attitudes, the child's appearance at birth, the wishes of his parents, the parents' social expectations, the state of the nation at the time of his birth, or the clan from which he was born. While the present study appears to be comparable to the other two, it examines personal naming trends in a different language that reflect the conditions of the name giver's family.

In her research on Zulu personal naming customs, Suzman (1994) agrees with Dickens (1985) regarding the elements that affect the selection of a person's name: These names record a number of important moments in the family's past, including their joy at having a boy and then a girl as their firstborn children, their hopes of carrying on the

family name, marital issues, the mother's difficult pregnancy, and the child's somewhat late birth. Furthermore, these elements establish the categories into which a specific name can be placed.

According to Mandende (2009), who studied Tshivenda personal names, most African societies follow distinct patterns or categories for personal names. These include those that represent ancestry, traditional beliefs and meanings, cultural practices, reincarnation and commemoration, derogation (to denigrate), and name changes or substitutions. The study also showed how the meanings associated with the morphological composition of personal names might represent the experiences and messages of both the community and the name-giver. Africans, specifically Vhavenda, reorganise several morphemes from various word categories to convey their innermost sentiments. It was discovered that many African personal names, and Tshivenda personal names specifically, allude to the family or community situations during a specific period of their life.

Furthermore, according to Neethling (2007), anthroponymy—the study of people's names or personal naming—is frequently governed by name-giving customs that are already in place in a particular culture or society. Once a custom has become ingrained, the majority of people in that specific culture or society will typically adhere to the broad guidelines. Family names and surnames are typically inherited, which means they stay constant for a very long time. Maybe this applies to the majority of communities. In contrast, first names are less fixed, and it is in this domain that those who choose names occasionally "digress" from tradition or even "experiment" with naming. Heredity may also be involved in some way. For instance, patronymics may be used to honour a child's father or grandfather through naming.

III. 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 Encyclopedia 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 founders 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 led 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. 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. Fochtmann (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 the 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 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 require to be interpreted to fulfill Husserl's proposed theory which advocates for 'being' and 'meaning.'

IV. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This was a qualitative study that was non-numerical and subjective (Brink and 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&Sseyewa, 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 5 primary and secondary schools in the Kabwe district. Ten (10) 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 10 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 purpose of the study was briefly explained to the responders. We considered ethical considerations prior to conducting in-person, in-depth interviews with individuals. Informed consent, withdrawal freedom, deceit, protection from bodily and psychological harm, confidentiality, anonymity, and academic integrity were all explained to interviewees.

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)

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Angelina Tembo Girls' Secondary School

Angelina Tembo Girls' Secondary School is located in Kabwe'sBwacha Township in Central Province. The school is Grant-aided and run by the Little Servants of Mary Immaculate Sisters of the Catholic Church. The school was opened on 3rd May 1965 as a Catholic Primary School under the auspice of the Little Servants of Mary Immaculate Sisters with Sister BetchGetrude 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 honor. In August 1966, the school changed its name to Angelina Tembo Girls' Primary School.

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

B. DanfordChirwa Secondary School

DanfordChirwa Secondary School was founded in the 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 the 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 Bwacha A. The school hosted Grades 1-4 called Standard 1-4 by then.

As time went on, practitioners saw that there was a 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, MrDanfordChirwa who was the chairperson for UNIP representing Bwacha Constituency.

C. David Ramushu Primary School

The school was named after Reverend (Rev.) David Ramushu, in remembrance of his contributions to building schools, health centers, and Methodist (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 inthe 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 NgunguTownship, and 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 centers. 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.

D. 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 MwaangaNkumbula in 1948. The school was named after Kombe in honor of his immense contribution to the political development of the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress Party. The school which started as a co-sex primary school has been upgraded to a girls' secondary school. To date, Raphael Kombe is remembered as a hero freedom fighter who contributed to Zambian's attainment of independence in 1964.

E. 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 Officers (PDO) on the 10th of August, 2020 in honor of the pillar of the Salesian community Don John Bosco.

On 12th December 2020, the government requested the name to be changed as it was the same as another school in Kabwe urban district. The provincial council with the Planning and Development Office from the 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.

VI. CONCLUSION

We can draw the conclusion that naming things influenced by specific phenomena is ingrained in human nature. For a considerable amount of time, researchers have understood the power of names. To identify, symbolise, refer to, characterise, simplify, and organise, names are given to objects, locations, and people. People felt obligated to give names to objects, people, and even weather patterns even before the writing alphabet was invented and oral history predates written history. From ancient tribes to the present, naming customs transcend cultures, faiths, geographical areas, and historical periods. Ultimately, the study's researchers draw the conclusion that names are a historical record that convey a variety of elements about a people's way of life, including its history, beliefs, and customs.

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