



Research article

ASSESSMENT OF BEHAVIORAL TRANSFORMATION OF CITIZENS AFTER THE DECLARATION OF ZAMBIA AS A CHRISTIAN NATION - A CASE STUDY

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Doi: <https://doi.org/10.54513/BSJ.2023.5205>

ARTICLE INFO



Article history:

Received 22-04-2023

Accepted: 28-05- 2023

Available online 16-06 -2023

Keywords:

*Biblical Teaching;
Behavioral change;
Christian nation; Zambia*

ABSTRACT

Christianity is a religion which believes in Jesus Christ as the personal redeemer and adherents of Christianity are believed to conduct themselves in a sacred behavior. The affirmation of Zambia as a Christian nation was done by the government in the second republic. The aim of this study was to assess the behavioral change which might have taken place since the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were applied to collect the data. A total sum of 384 (189 females and 195 males) individuals and 15 FGD were interviewed. Our results showed that 40.1% of individual respondents and 60% of FGD observed the behavioral change in the community. While 9.1% of the respondents and 15% of FGD said that sanity was brought to the country and 4.1% said there were good moral values observed after the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation. There was a statistically significance in our study ($X^2= 18.7$; $p\text{-value} =0.001$). It was conclusively, suggested that the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation had expedited transformation in the behavior of some individuals. They were able to know, understand and revere biblical teachings.



Introduction

Christianity is the religion which believes in Jesus Christ as the personal savior. They believe that to be saved, one has to repent. This implies turning away from immoral acts and by faith follow and believe in Jesus Christ. Henceforth, endeavor to be like him in deeds with the sole aim of attaining eternal life in heaven, which is God's abode. This religion is more common in continents such as Africa, Europe and America, but the religion is spreading fast in other countries. Most Christians are Trinitarians. They believe in the triune God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Water baptism is a primary rite of passage performed in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They believe that following Jesus Christ means bearing traits of a good person, just like Jesus, who was a compassionate person¹. The deeds of a Christian should exhibit a good heart and behave in a manner befitting a Christian Community. Followers should not indulge themselves in drinking beer, sexual immorality, stealing etc. as stipulated in the Holy Bible.

The behavioral transformation can be temporary or permanent. This is considered a change in an individual's behavior when compared to previous conduct. In a Christian family, individuals have to focus on Jesus Christ, but if any member of the family changes and abandons Christian values, it's considered behavior change. This is so because the person was a Christian but has backslidden to conducting strange behavior. In Christianity, all members are expected to follow Christian values as stipulated in the Holy Bible. The Bible in the Epistle to the Galatians 5: 19-21 indicates clearly the things people should not do in order to maintain their Christianity.

Galatians 5:19-21.

*"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God"*².

The passage stipulates that those who follow Christ and are Christians should not do things against the Bible, but they should do things in accordance with Galatians 5: 22-24³.

Galatians 5:22-24

¹ Bible, H., & Translation, *Holman Christian Standard Bible*.

² Bible, H., & Translation.

³ Bible, *New International Version*.



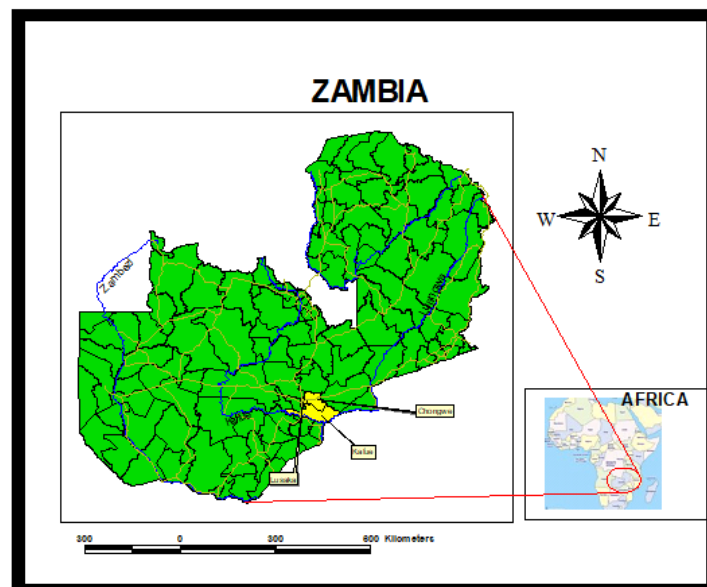
“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things, there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires”⁴.

In Christian theology or Christology (study of Christianity) most individuals change their behavior towards Christianity due to environmental factors such as group influence, desires of the flesh, admiration or any other factors as may be present at that time and lead to temptation. Psychologists may consider that transformation of ideas is influenced by individual thinking, social and environmental factors⁵. The aim of this study, was to find out if individuals have changed their behavior either towards Christianity or vice versa after Zambia was declared a Christian nation. This study took place in Zambia, which was declared a Christian nation by the former leadership.

Material and Methods

Study Site

The study took place in the districts of Lusaka, Chongwe and Kafue in the Lusaka Province of Zambia. The area was selected because of its population density and there are many churches and other religions. The authors thought this area would give an overview of the behavior of citizens whether they have changed or not. Whether they would opt to continue as a Christian nation or adopt either Secularism or pluralism. The area has over 3 million people (Fig 1).



⁴ Bible, H., & Translation, *Holman Christian Standard Bible*.

⁵ Roberts, “Parameters of a Christian Psychology.”



Figure 1: The study site (Yellow)

Sample Size

The sample size was generated from the formula described by Biswas and Charan in 2013. The use of that formula generated a sample size of 386, taking into consideration the previous prevalence of 50% at the 95% Confidence interval and the marginal error of 5%⁶.

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame is the actual set of units from which a sample is drawn⁷. Simple random sampling was used to collect data in this study. Lusaka province is made up of six districts and the three districts; Lusaka, Kafue and Chongwe, were selected at random. Two townships were purposively selected from each selected district.

In Lusaka District; Matero and Woodlands townships were selected while in Kafue District; Shikoswe and Kafue Estates were selected and in Chongwe District; Chongwe Central and Chongwe Ma-plot were selected. Fifteen (15) FGD interviewed that is five focus groups from each of the three selected districts, were established.

Organizations from which the sample came were; the Independent Churches of Zambia (ICoZ), the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), Seventh Day Adventists (SDA), Jehovah's Witnesses (JWs) and the New Apostolic Church (NAC), Council of Churches in Zambia, Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and Islamic Supreme Council.

Study Design and Methodology

This study used a cross-sectional study design. The sociological analysis of reality in everyday life and knowledge that guides conduct among intellectuals and merchants of ideas were supplemented⁸. It employed the sociological research method invoked by the three concepts of Karl R. Popper, "problems-theories-critics." It examined the public's position and its construction of knowledge, society and daily activities through processes of social interaction in order to tackle study objectives. The method enabled the study to examine subjective meanings, experiences, and behaviours of participants in relation to pronounced

⁶ Charan and Biswas, "How to Calculate Sample Size for Different Study Designs in Medical Research?"

⁷ Martínez-Mesa et al., "Sampling: How to Select Participants in My Research Study?"

⁸ Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*.



illicit activities. Individuals were interrogated on their past behaviour as compared to the present one⁹.

The assessment of these perceptions employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. To allow for a detailed exploration of individuals and their social interaction in the community, it applied the probability, simple sampling method. This way, every case of the population had an equal chance of inclusion in the sample¹⁰. It hinged on the positivists' position for advancing knowledge that believes in "determining cause and effect"¹¹. Survey methodologies and prearranged instruments intended for gathering data for analysis did apply¹².

Quantitative Method

Key in this study method was the questionnaire. The selected respondents were engaged from each religious organization. Qualitative studies are useful in human geography and phenomenological research. They bring out realities by capturing and communicating participants' views and perspectives.

The goal of quantitative methods of data collection was to quantify and measure a phenomenon by questionnaires and statistical processing of the information collected¹³. They focus on worldviews usually by employing abstract concepts¹⁴.

Qualitative Method

This research employed semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus groups discussion; selected in order to produce thorough replies about individuals' experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings and knowledge. Face-to-face interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) enabled the researcher to understand knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP).

⁹ Cropley, "Qualitative Research Methods: A Practice-Oriented Introduction for Students of Psychology and Education."

¹⁰ Taherdoost H, "Determining Sample Size; How to Calculate Survey Sample Size by Hamed Taherdoost :: SSRN."

¹¹ Hameed: Taherdoost, "Sampling Methods in Research Methodology ; How to Choose a Sampling Technique for Research Hamed Taherdoost To Cite This Version : HAL Id : Hal-02546796 Sampling Methods in Research Methodology ; How to Choose a Sampling Technique For."

¹² Trochim, W. M., & Urban, "Theoretical Foundations and Philosophical Orientation of Relational Systems Evaluation."

¹³ Gumicio, S., Merica, M., Luhman, N., Fauvel, G., Zompi, S., & Ronsse, "The KAP Survey Model (Knowledge, Attitudes & Practices)."

¹⁴ Cropley, "Qualitative Research Methods: A Practice-Oriented Introduction for Students of Psychology and Education."



Working Group

Two distinct groups made up a working group. In addition to the principal researcher, eighteen members made the working group. The researcher interviewed the inner circle of the organisations, which hosted the sample. The team members joined the researcher in interviewing individuals in selected districts with the questionnaires. In addition, sampling was from selected religious organizations. In particular, Christian and Islamic groups thus employed triangulation since themes cut across multiple organizational boundaries. The researcher developed an individual rapport with team members, therefore allowed them to share what they could not do in a group. This research aimed at satisfying the transferability and dependability of the results.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

A Focus Group is a small group of participants cautiously nominated for an open discussion during research¹⁵. Group discussions enabled this research to gather qualitative data, which was both inductive and naturalistic. To ensure that participants were comfortable with each other, homogeneity in social grouping was applied. A FGD was made up between of 8 to 12 members and five (5) Focus Groups were created from each district bringing a total to fifteen groups.

Eligibility Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

Only those aged 18 years and above, who were willing to participate in the research were recruited.

Exclusion Criteria

Individuals that were less than 18 years old and those unwilling to participate in the study were excluded.

Selection of Participants and Sampling Methods

¹⁵ Nyumba O et al., "The Use of Focus Group Discussion Methodology: Insights from Two Decades of Application in Conservation."



Sampling is the process through which the selection of individuals and households or sampling units from the sample frame was undertaken¹⁶. By so doing, the researcher was able to gather information based on the results from a subset without necessarily dealing with each individual. This reduced the number of individuals in the study and ultimately, the cost, workload and eased up the acquisition of the required information. The sampling strategy was random in the selected districts in which religious organizations were included. Within the Churches and Mosques, random sampling took place among eligible participants.

Data Collection Plan and Tools

The collection of data covered a period of six months. It was a composite of primary and secondary data. The collection of information was manual. The key data collection tools were structured interviews. The respondents provided closed and open responses. Data collectors underwent an orientation on data or information collection and entry for two weeks.

Data Analysis

This data was entered using Microsoft Excel software and exported to EPI info version 6.0 a statistical software to facilitate analysis. The descriptive statistics depended on the data and its requirements. The variables calculated included; Mean, Prevalence, Chi-square(χ^2), Confidence interval (CI) and p-value. For qualitative data, Content data analysis (CDA) was used to analyse such data¹⁷.

Results

A total of 384 individuals, where 189 and 195 were females and males respectively, and 15 focus group discussion were interviewed from the six townships in the districts. These were:- Matero 128/384, Woodlands 127/384, Kafue estate 32/384, Shikoswe 32/384, Chongwe central 32/384 and Chongwe ma plot 33/384 individuals (Table 1).

The individuals interviewed were from the following organisation; ICoZ, EFZ, SDA, RCC, NAC and CCZ were 48/384 (12.5%) in each organisation while 49/384 (12.2%) and 47/384 (12.8%) were from Islam and JW respectively (Table 2).

¹⁶ Martínez-Mesa et al., "Sampling: How to Select Participants in My Research Study?"

¹⁷ Bennett, D., Barrett, A., & Helmich, "How To... Analyse Qualitative Data in Different Ways."



Table 1: Number of samples from the each Compound/Township

Residential area	No. interviewed	Gender		FGD	Sampling Units
		F	M		
Matero	128 (33.3%)	68	60	3	131
Woodlands	127 (33.1%)	68	59	2	129
Kafue Estates	32 (8.3%)	12	20	2	34
Shikoswe	32 (8.3%)	11	21	3	35
Chongwe Central	32 (8.3%)	15	17	3	35
Chongwe ma plot	33 (8.6%)	15	18	2	35
Total	384	189	195	15	399

Table 2: Individuals interviewed by religion or organisation

Residential area	ICoZ	EFZ	JWs	SDA	RCC	NAC	Islam	CCZ	Total
Matero	16	16	16	16	17	15	16	16	128
Woodlands	16	16	14	16	16	17	16	16	127
Kafue Estates	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32
Shikoswe	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	32
Chongwe Central	4	4	5	4	3	5	4	4	32
Chongwe Ma plot	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	33
Total	48	48	47	48	48	48	49	48	384

ICoZ= Independent Churches of Zambia, EFZ= Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, CCZ= Christian Council of Zambia, SDA= Seventh Day Adventist, RCC= Roman Catholic Church, NAC= New Apostolic Church, JW= Jehovah's Witness and Islam = Islamic Supreme Council



Our findings revealed that upon the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation; 40.1% (154/384) individuals said their lifestyle had changed and were interested in knowing God and the Bible, 9.1% (35/384) said it brought sanity in the county, 3.6% (14/384) indicated that it had instilled moral values. 1.0% (4/384) said that the illegal dealings were concealed in the declaration, while 31.8% (122/384) respondents said that the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation had no effect (Table 3). In FGD, our findings indicated 60% said there was a change in the life of some individuals.

Table 3: How declaration of Christian nation affected the respondents

Activity	*FGD	Individual Respondent	%	CI (%)	Chi-square, P-value
Affects people judgment	1(6.7%)	18	4.7	3-7	X ² = 18.7 p-value= 0.0001
Not affected at all	0	122	31.8	27-37	
Brought Sanity in the country	2(13%)	35	9.1	6.6-12.4	
Changed life to know God	9(60%)	154	40.1	35.3-45.1	
Brought discrimination	0	12	3.1	1.8-5.4	
Dirty deals are concealed in declaration	2(13%)	4	1.0	0.4-2.6	
Instil moral values	1(6.7%)	14	3.6	2.2-6.0	
Not sure	0	10	2.6	1.4-4.7	
People mind their own business	0	15	3.9	2.4-6.3	
TOTAL	15	384			

The results are statistically significant at p<0.05.

*Using the content data analysis the results of our findings in FGD were calculated

DISCUSSION

The findings of 40.1% of interviewed individuals who indicated a change in their behavior from our study suggest that they were influenced by the declaration of Zambia as a Christian



nation. These responses suggest that they have been taught that being a Christian was a good thing for their lives. These findings were similar to those reported by Kurz¹⁸ and Hallowell¹⁹ who indicated that biblical teachings were able to transform people's characters from being immoral and unacceptable in the community to being morally upright and acceptable individuals. This indicated that individuals had their character transformed to becoming good citizens of the nation, suggesting that teachings were producing good yield as described in the Bible in Proverbs 3:1; 13:14, Mat 4:23. Based on biblical teaching and understanding of the Bible, individuals could repent. This probably could cite the writings in the Bible in John 8:31, John 14:23-24²⁰. The 60% FGD also indicated that there was a change in behavior of some individuals after the country was declared a Christian nation.

While 9.1% of individuals responded that the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation has brought sanity to the country. The findings suggest that they observed illegal and ungodly activities being conducted prior to the declaration of the Christian nation. This is an indication that illegal activities from individuals involved in such dealings had somehow been reduced. This was in tandem with biblical texts in Matthew 4:19-25 which indicate that preaching of the Word of God changes attitude as was the case when the word was preached to the fishermen. They abandoned the nets and followed Jesus Christ to be fishermen of men²¹.

According to 3.6% of individuals, the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation instilled good moral values in the communities, suggesting that there was a positive change in people's behavior, which saw a decline in immoral values. This was probably due to the constantly implementation of fora during which biblical information was taught. The communities probably observed a decrease in bad moral values within the communities as they labored to instil good moral values.

In contrast, 1% of the respondents said most bad deals were hidden in the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation. This suggests that they had observed or heard about the illegal dealing,s which were peddled by the so-called Christians but were concealed under the

¹⁸ Kurz, First Kurz government

¹⁹ Hallowel, Hallowell Comprehensive Plan

²⁰ Bible, H., & Translation, *Holman Christian Standard Bible*.

²¹ Bible, H., & Translation.



guise of Christianity to conduct illegitimate deals. This may probably suggest that such individuals were not compliant with Christian values and were hiding in the name of Christianity to conduct illegal dealings.

In conclusion, Christianity has an important role to play in the nation as many individuals are considered followers of Christ. This has changed the behavior of many citizens in the country. The findings conclusively suggest that many interviewed people were aware of the Christian nation and were following the stipulated commandments even though there was a pocket of individuals not abiding by this declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation.

Author's Contribution

MO data collection and formulated the research; NSS data analysis and designed the manuscript. Both authors read the final copy of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

There was no conflict of interest of the research

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the participants for according the data collection team a conducive environment for sample collection.

Ethical Consideration

The research was approved by the ethical committee of the Chreso University and the National Research Authority

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