

**PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMICS ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF ZAMBIA**

by

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MAY 2022

DECLARATION PAGE

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I declare that this thesis entitled: **The Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia** is my own work. All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references. It is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the subject of Philosophy of Education at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or other university.



SIGNATURE

31st May 2022

DATE

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family. A special feeling of gratitude to my lovely late mother, Ms. **Jennifer Laima SEBENTE**, and my caring father, Mr. **Siisii LISULO**, and stepmother, Mrs. **Catherine LISULO**, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAF	Alliance for Academic Freedom
AAUP	American Association of University Professors
ACC	Association of American Colleges
BSAC	British South Africa Company
EPRDF	Ethiopian Revolutionary Democratic Front
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HEA	Higher Education Authority
IRBs	Institutional Review Boards
MHE	Ministry of Higher Education
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PF	Patriotic Front
RDT	Resource Dependence Theory
REC	Research Ethics Committee
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNZA	University of Zambia
UoM	University of Mauritius
USA	United States of America
USC	United States Constitution
WB	World Bank
ZANEC	Zambia National Education Coalition

ABSTRACT

This study was based on perceptions about academic freedom at the University of Zambia. Its primary purpose was to critically study the state of academic freedom at UNZA by analysing the academics' and academic leaders' perceptions of how academic freedom was understood and practiced. "How do academics and academic leaders at UNZA perceive academic freedom?" was the study's main research question. The answer to this question was critical in achieving the study's stated purpose.

I was able to answer the question by combining phenomenological research design with other qualitative methodologies. I chose this design due to the nature of the research problem, which required information regarding the thoughts and perceptions of the 30 purposively selected participants (15 academics and 15 academic leaders). To gather data, I conducted semi-structured interviews and used documentation analysis to analyse documents. UNZA policy documents and Zambia National Policy documents were thoroughly examined.

The following significant findings resulted from the study: (1) Academics and academic leaders had varying perceptions of what academic freedom was and had a fair understanding of the concept; (2) academic freedom matters because it safeguards members of the academic community from internal and external constraints; (3) two realities of how academic freedom was practised at UNZA were uncovered: the first suggesting that academic freedom was practised in teaching and research at UNZA, and the second, suggesting that academics and academic leaders did not know how academic freedom was practised at the institution; (4) financial resources had a direct positive and negative effect on academic freedom at UNZA; (5) academics and academic leaders experienced various challenges in exercising academic freedom causing UNZA not to ultimately realise its mission of creating knowledge through scholarship and research; (6) various strategies were highlighted that could be put in place to facilitate academic freedom at UNZA.

The study's main conclusion was that academic freedom was perceived to be necessary. UNZA needs to uphold and safeguard academic freedom to provide academics with

positive motivation to fulfil the university's mission. However, as important as academic freedom was perceived by the participants, it was revealed that academics at UNZA did not fully enjoy academic freedom. Ultimately the study has filled a population gap in the knowledge by adding the voices and perceptions of Zambian academic and academic leaders to the literature on academic freedom.

Key terms

Academics; Academic Freedom; Academic Leaders; Critical Investigation; Perceptions; University; University of Zambia.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The University of Zambia (UNZA) made a statement on April 29, 2021, condemning notable Zambian professor Sishuwa Sishuwa for a highly opinionated essay he had published in a newspaper. Sishuwa's "conditioned projection" did not include a prediction of conflict in Zambia following the elections later that year. However, many saw the critique as an attack on the Edgar Lungu presidency and its ruling Patriotic Front (PF) party. The article had appeared in the Mail & Guardian of South Africa, a news outlet that enjoyed enormous global readership and in the News Diggers on April 26, 2021 (Sambo et al., 2021: 2). Several days later, Emmanuel Mwamba, Zambia's Ambassador to Ethiopia and a senior member of the PF regime, reported Sishuwa to the Police. Mwamba accused Sishuwa of writing and publishing seditious material. Furthermore, he claimed that Sishuwa's article had the "capacity to instigate a public uprising." This debacle led to protracted engagements between the University of Zambia management and regional academic groupings, such as a consortium of close 150 academics from around the world, who leapt to the defence of Sishuwa (Simwinga, 2021: 7).

Interestingly, an item titled "UNZA Lecturer Scoops Top International Research Award" may be seen on the University of Zambia's official website. This article, published in the Journal of Southern African Studies in November 2020, recognises and congratulates Sishuwa on his award of the Terrence Ranger Prize, which is given annually to the best article by a first-time author published in the Journal of Southern African Studies the previous year (Sambo et al., 2021: 2). In November 2020, when Sishuwa was awarded for his intellectual capacity, UNZA thanked him and acknowledged his achievement, as they should have done; yet, when a senior regime official accuses Sishuwa of sedition, UNZA rushes to disavow him as soon as possible? The preceding incidence highlighted the very nuanced circumstances surrounding academic freedom in Sub-Saharan Africa. Moreover, it shows how academics may frequently clash with oppressive governments that are not very lenient on dissenting views. Finally, the incidence also exemplified what may happen when the space around freedom of expression among academics begins to shrink (Simwinga, 2021: 7).

What exactly do we mean by academic freedom? The notion seems to be broadly recognised, yet its meaning is often contested. The American Association of University Professors' 1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure specified three critical characteristics of academic freedom: freedom in the classroom, research, and extramural discourse. Several recent publications that examine academic freedom as both a theoretical and legal issue demonstrate the range (and complexity) of such explanations. Moreover, this scholarship represents an opposed approach to defending academic freedom. In one school of thought, academic freedom is conceived as "a category of political freedom" (Bromwich, 2015: 62). It is one of the many rights that a free society has." According to its most radical proponent, Stanley Fish, (2021: 66) academic freedom is "unique to the academic profession and restricted to the accomplishment of its essential obligations." According to this viewpoint, academic freedom is predicated on professional autonomy and has no apparent connection to the more enormous liberties the citizenry may lay claim to.

Academic freedom encompasses, among other things, the opportunity to talk freely on campus, in the classroom, in the library, and in print (Caston, 2006:307). Academic freedom is critical to achieving the university's aims. Academics have entire freedom to educate, conduct research, and serve the public without interference from any source. Academic freedom must be protected while shielding faculty from outside influences that could jeopardise their research or teaching. These issues are worsened by states, society, and academic organisations. To protect the right to academic freedom, university employees must be protected from persecution, harassment, and intimidation based on the content of their intellectual activity or personal convictions.

This is secured by supplying tenure to academic employees and banning arbitrary dismissal or removal from their positions. Unless for grounds of proved misbehaviour and incompetence incompatible with the academic profession, from employment, disciplinary actions for dismissal or removal must be conducted according to officially established processes, and the accused must be given a fair hearing before a fully constituted body of academic peers. As a result, public universities' complete enjoyment of academic freedom is undermined in many parts of the world (Altbach, 2001:205). For instance,

academic freedom is not defined; it falls under freedom of expression. As a result, neither the law nor the constitution adequately defines academic freedom and its significance in Zambia. The lack of formal legal authority reflects the state of academic freedom at UNZA and nationally.

Given that the preceding only scratches the surface of the nature of this right to academic freedom, the question of how African academics see their access to these rights arises. Consequently, even though academic freedom has become the subject or focus of a rising body of work, little attention has been made to how Zambian academics perceive their access to academic freedom. I am unaware of any in-depth study exploring the perceptions of academic freedom among Zambian academics. While there is a growing body of literature on human rights in Africa, none addresses the particular subject of how academics perceive academic freedom. This is even more perplexing considering the substantial infringements of academic freedom in most African nations since independence. Sishuwa's debacle is a case in point. This research, then, aims to bridge the gap in the understandings of academic freedom by examining the topic from the perspective of Zambian academics and academic leaders.

According to the Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC), professors at Zambia's public universities and colleges have been classified as "opposition sympathisers" in research on the status of academic freedom (ZANEC, n.d: 21). Even though Zambia's public universities have had a long history of autonomy, politics have infiltrated higher education institutions. This clearly indicates that academic freedom is under attack at the University of Zambia (UNZA). Even though some of the ideas of UNZA academics might have been preserved. We do not know how many more academics are being kept in the dark by politicians. For this reason, the issue of political influence in Zambia's universities and colleges was considered while assessing academic freedom at UNZA.

The preservation and assurance of academic freedom are essential in Africa since the sole hope for the continent's regeneration lies in educating its people. This can be carried out only in an atmosphere where academics educate the African people to have the freedom to pursue their academic job. The feelings of academic freedom among Zambian academics and academic leaders provide an empirically grounded enrichment of

scholarship in this arena. The findings of ZANEC are an important indicator that politicians do not grasp universities' role in knowledge generation. Although this information contradicts popular belief, it ultimately serves as the foundation of many valuable ideas for the broader community. Therefore, universities should produce and impart knowledge to stay current and develop critical thinking.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The claim that the PF government had used resource impoverishment to stifle the dissenting voices with the Zambian academy presents exciting reading. It amplifies what various commentators have noted about academic freedom within Africa. However, the dearth of literature investigating the perceptions of academics on academic freedom presents a massive gap in what we know about the subject. Although in the global arena, the concept of academic freedom is extensively discussed, scant attention has been devoted to how academics perceive academic freedom in Zambia. Furthermore, there has been no research done to explore academic freedom through the lens of the social capital and resource dependence theories.

Evidence from the literature suggests that academic freedom is mainly predicated on the financial basis (Caston, 2006: 305). A wealthy nation can grant more freedom and opportunities for academics in their universities than in a developing country. However, UNZA, Zambia's flagship university, has received a steadily declining budgetary allocation from the state (UNZA, 2012: 4). Hence, UNZA has insufficient contemporary books and materials published by UNZA academics because the university has lagged in research and publication (UNZA, 2014: 414). The implications of resource impoverishment in constraining (or enabling) academic freedom have not been studied closely. The absence of academics' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA presents a gap worth filling. Whether academic freedom has been constrained or enjoyed at UNZA has not been the subject of an empirical study. For these reasons, there was a need for this study which seeks to uncover perspectives that can inform the regulatory and policy framework for the pursuit of academic freedom.

1.3 Historical Background of the Study

UNZA was established by the University of Zambia Act of 1965. Under the Act, the university chancellorship was assigned to the President. In addition, under the Act, the Chancellor (President) was empowered to appoint the Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Carmody, 2004: 28). According to Kelly (1999: 1003), in October 1965, His Excellency President Kaunda gave his consent to Act No. 66 of 1965. As a result, UNZA opened on March 17, 1966. This very day, the Ridgeway Campus began its first academic session. The university began with three schools: Humanities and Social Sciences, Education, and Natural Sciences. As facilities evolved and new needs were recognised, new schools were developed, namely the School of Law, the School of Engineering, the School of Mining, the School of Agricultural Sciences, and the Samora Machel School of Veterinary Medicine.

On July 12, 1966, President Kenneth Kaunda was formally installed as Chancellor in the presence of fifty university representatives from other countries and two thousand guests (UNZA, 2012: 1). Since the first Parliamentary Act of UNZA, the university has undergone several changes in its governance and operations. Following the emergence of the Third Republic in November 1991, parliament passed the University Act No. 26 of 1992, which incorporated changes to the university's administration (UNZA, 2012:1). The Act of 1992 provided for a titular Chancellor appointed from citizens who had distinguished themselves in their professional careers and contributed to national development. In addition, the 1992 Act offered institutional academic freedom.

According to Standler (1999: n.p), institutional academic freedom is a privilege that belongs to a group of scholars to shield them from government interference. The Act thus decreased the Minister of Education's control over the university's governance. The UNZA Strategic Plan (2012:2) states that significant attempts have been made to reaffirm public universities' autonomy. However, the 1992 University Act was repealed and replaced by the 1999 University Act No. 11 because the Minister of Higher Education (MHE) had considerable control over the university's administration under this Act. It was repealed and replaced by the 2013 Higher Education Act No. 4, which is the one in use today. This Act legislates the establishment, administration, and control of public higher

learning institutions (UNZA, 2017: 2). In line with the above, Hampwaye & Mweemba (2013:1) note that UNZA confers academic freedom as an autonomous university. UNZA's key roles, as illustrated in its Strategic Plan 2018-2022 (2017: 3-4), include advancing knowledge through teaching, academic study, and scientific research, encouraging learning in its student body and society in general, and cultivating a capacity for independent critical thought. UNZA fosters academic freedom to fulfil these roles.

UNZA was founded on the rationale of relevance. This statement is clearly articulated in the mission statement, which states that UNZA will provide relevant university education (UNZA, 2012:16). In almost all universities in developing countries, the idea of a university as an instrument of national development through research and community service has become the central theme of the latest thought. UNZA is no exception and has been developed with this concept in mind. However, according to the UNZA Strategic Plan (2012:11), the university is politically affected by political players (it is like a political battleground). Carmody (2004: 181) agrees with the preceding that UNZA does not always serve as a political critic. Instead, he argues that it is a place of political cowardice. He further notes that the Second Republic's political regime under the one-party government was not friendly to UNZA academics. Hence, the quietude disposition of academics because the one-party state made academic freedom challenging to exercise.

On the one hand, UNZA's academic freedom may be challenged because the government is the university's main financial sponsor. This situation has probably forced the university to sacrifice its academic freedom to please the government. This assumption aligns with the adage that "He who pays the piper dictates the tune". Hence, some university academics have been co-opted into government and have followed the party's ideologies (Carmody, 2004). There are undoubtedly many explanations for this, but what would seem to be true is that for whatever reason, the university has not been as powerful as it would reasonably be expected to be for democratic governance and justice.

A survey of the literature reveals that researchers have paid scant attention to the voices of academics in evaluating academic freedom in specific locales. Through this study, I hope to fill these gaps by highlighting how one case, UNZA, promotes academic freedom

to facilitate research and teaching. Furthermore, if any challenges undermine academic freedom, the study highlights them and suggests possible and logically accepted interventions to address the challenges surrounding academic freedom. Finally, in instances where the findings show that academic freedom is not exercised at UNZA, the study develops strategies that can be applied to facilitate academic freedom as a critical requirement for the university's development. Some researchers have claimed that only a few universities enjoy academic freedom, even though it is a requirement for work. It is not clear if UNZA is among the few that enjoy academic freedom, hence the current study.

The study intends to fill the void by providing tangible data derived primarily from academics and academic leaders' voices. The study is expected to provide vital information for UNZA and the Zambian government for them to be acquainted with their responsibilities in matters of academic freedom and be well informed in disseminating information to address the problems that plague the higher education system in the country. Academic freedom is essential to the advancement, transmission, and application of knowledge.

Furthermore, it will provide policymakers with critical insight as they draft legislation for academic freedom in the higher education sector. In line with the aforementioned, it is hoped that the findings of this study will motivate public institutions of higher learning to advocate for academic freedom to be enshrined in the national constitution or a parliamentary act, both of which would ensure that academic freedom is properly implemented. This enables university administration to protect and respect faculty members' right to pursue scholarly endeavours without interruption.

It is also hoped that the study results will be informative to all academics regarding the exercise of academic freedom. It will recommend orienting academics on the tenets of academic freedom, which are exercised through research, teaching and community service. Anyone interested in or working in higher education should understand academic freedom. It is assumed that when academics are aware of academic freedom, they are likely to minimise interference and protect the right of teaching, learning and research. This assumption is ultimately crucial to the university to accomplish the mission of teaching and research.

According to Chachage (2008: 44), the state of academic freedom in Africa leaves much to be desired. This is because academic freedom belongs to those who control and own the means of knowledge production and its dissemination. No country can make headway significantly without guaranteeing academic freedom to its universities (Okai & Worlu, 2014: 192). Academic freedom should be more than a policy direction. It must be thoroughly enjoyed. To this end, no country can inadvertently develop without academic freedom. Hence, academic freedom is hoped to improve the country's economy and political consciousness and prepare technological development. Without academic freedom, our society would lose academics' best inventions and creative works. UNZA has inadequate up-to-date books and materials. Hence it is not serving its core function of advancing knowledge through research and publication. Perhaps this could be the reason Zambia is still a developing country. Academic freedom serves to advance the core function of higher education; advancing knowledge through research and creativity (Tamirat, 2015: 1). Scholarly research and publishing are integral components of the academic world. The importance of publishing to any academic is perhaps best underlined by the maxim 'publish or perish. Indeed, publishing in the academic world determines scholars' standing or status within their local community and internationally. Thus, academic freedom should be seen as the cornerstone of economic development. I hope that the findings will generate strategies on how universities in developing countries like Zambia will improve and exercise academic freedom to accomplish their core function of research and publication.

Ultimately, this study will help improve the exercise of academic freedom; as such, members of the academic community will be protected from unreasonable constraints on their academic activities. Duvall et al. (2004: np) state that "academic freedom holds that, in order to advance knowledge, members of the academic community must be free to pose questions and explore ideas in teaching, research and the arts, and learning unfettered by political or theological interference". Academics should be given breathing space to advance knowledge by researching and writing scholarly papers and books. Academics' capacity to accomplish their best job may be limited by a fear of offending both internal (university administration) and external (students) (politicians, donors, and high-ranking administrators). Academic freedom is a broad concept that empowers

lecturers to talk openly and critically about their fields of study, as well as to challenge widely held opinions. According to the doctrine of academic freedom, a professor has the liberty to explore and publish on any problematic topic they want. Academic freedom is the bedrock upon which colleges and universities are built. Finally, I believe the study will add to the current body of knowledge and literature on academic freedom, as well as act as a springboard for further research into the subject.

1.4. Clarification of Concepts

Throughout the thesis, I use a few technical concepts that need to be explained for clarity at this stage to eliminate ambiguity and provide various interpretations that are both immediate and purposeful to this study. To help the reader follow along with the argument, I've included some definitions. I clarify the differences and meanings of the terminology used in the research by defining them. This strategy aids in expressing the context and evolution of their use (Ehsani, 2006:49). Using the preliminary definitions from the study is a great place to start.

1. Academics

As used in this paper, an academic refers to a teacher or scholar in a university or other higher learning institution. In other words, an academic is considered scholarly (York et al., 2015: 43). Further, an academic is involved in teaching, research, and community service. This conceptualisation provides a definitional umbrella when considering the various usages of the term. The allied term, 'academic leader,' is a subsidiary concept because it expresses the many dimensions of faculty members. One cannot be an academic leader minus being an academic. Hence an academic leader is also regarded as an academic because they have joint administrative and academic work responsibilities. In the context of this study, an academic leader still participates in teaching and research.

For this reason, academic leaders are part of the study sample, even when they do not appear on the study's title because they are encapsulated in the definition of 'academics'. Moreover, they were also part of the study sample because they required academic freedom to conduct their day to day administrative and scholarly work. So, in this study,

there were instances where 'academics' was solely mentioned, as 'academic leaders' were contextually embedded in it. The concept is used to describe lecturers, academicians, faculty members, scholars, researchers, professors, Deans, Heads of departments and Chief librarians. They are the lifeblood of a university without which the university would not exist.

2. Academic Community

An academic refers to a faculty member or scholar at higher education institutions, such as a university. On the one hand, a community refers to a group of people who comply with specific laws and constitutions and strive to accomplish a shared purpose (Beltrán, 2009: 40). Therefore, the academic community is described as a collective of scholars collaborating for the same end, creating knowledge through research and dissemination. On the other hand, it is the body or group of people who teach, study, or otherwise work at higher learning institutions. Finally, it is a body or group of people that pursue knowledge in higher learning institutions. In this study, academic community members include Academics, Lecturers, Academicians, Scholars, Researchers, Professors, Academic Leaders, Vice-Chancellor, Deans, Heads Of departments, and Chief Librarian.

3. Academic Freedom

Furthermore, in this study, I adopt one principle of the German Humboldtian principles of academic freedom called *Lehrfreiheit*. *Lehrfreiheit* entails academic freedom as a right of individual academics (Fish, 2021: 35). It is the freedom of individual academics to conduct academic activities and express their views freely. Academic freedom is an elusive concept to define. There is a general understanding that it is meant to protect researchers and academics from those in ranks of power and authority. The content of academic freedom has never been clear-cut as it carries many definitions that have evolved under diverse historical circumstances and power relations (Fish, 2021: 68). In this study, academic freedom applies to the right of individual academic community members to appropriately perform their academic obligations of teaching, research, publishing, and expression of views without fear of restraint or reprisals.

4. Higher Learning Institution

As used in this study, a higher learning institution refers to an institution that trains highly qualified specialists and scientific and pedagogical personnel (Skelcher et al. 2020: 133). This typically means a higher learning institution is a college, university, vocational, or business school that provides advanced training at a post-secondary level leading to a diploma or degree certificate. In the context of this research, the term signifies a community of academics engaged in teaching and research. It is a source of knowledge.

5. Perceptions

For this study, perceptions refer to academics' views and opinions on academic freedom at UNZA (Jefferson et al., 2015: 67). The singular word for "perception" refers to the ability to comprehend the real essence of things, the idea, opinion, or picture you have due to how you view or understand something. In other words, it means how something is regarded, understood or interpreted. In the context of this research, it refers to a way of regarding, understanding or interpreting something.

6. University

In this study, 'university' refers to a public institution of higher learning that provides facilities for teaching and research and is authorised to confer academic degrees (Boulton & Lucas, 2011: 43). A university is a place where the mind can safely expand and speculate. Inquiry is pressed forward, discoveries are verified and perfected, and errors are revealed by the collision of the mind with knowledge. It is a high-level educational institution providing facilities for teaching and research and is authorised to confer academic degrees.

7. Public University

A public university is a higher learning institution in government ownership or primarily financed by the government. It is a university established and run by the government or state (Newfield, 2011). A state government predominantly funds it. In the context of this study, a public university is a national institution of higher learning which is mainly run or funded by the state/government but at the same time functions as a completely independent body inside the same state. It is wholly or partly maintained or financed by the government.

1.5. Research Questions

1.5.1 Main Research Question

- How do UNZA academics and academic leaders perceive academic freedom?

1.5.2 Sub-Research Questions

The following research questions guided the research study:

- 1) How do academics and academic leaders at UNZA understand academic freedom?
- 2) How do these academics and academic leaders perceive the practice of academic freedom within UNZA?
- 3) What do academics and academic leaders perceive as helping promote and improve academic freedom UNZA?

1.6. Research Objectives

1.6.1 Main Research Objective

- To investigate academics' and academic leaders' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA.

1.6.2 Sub-Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were the following:

- To establish how academics and academic leaders at UNZA understand academic freedom.
- To find out how these academics and academic leaders perceive the practice of academic freedom at UNZA; and
- To explore the best practices that academics and academics can propose to promote and improve academic freedom.

1.7. Aim

The study sought to ascertain the situation of academic freedom at UNZA by investigating the perceptions of academics and academic leaders on academic freedom. It was expected that the study would highlight the current situation of academic freedom at UNZA. The participants' perceptions would then help us understand how academic freedom was exercised to make UNZA an actual engine for knowledge generation and innovation. The study contends that academic freedom should strengthen knowledge generation if adequately practised. The intention was to find out how UNZA provides and safeguards academic freedom for its academics and examine the academic's satisfaction with academic freedom practices and policies. The study also explores if academics are knowledgeable about current policies and practices of academic freedom. The study attempts to uncover the shackles that undermine, abuse, and inhibit the true nature and effective execution of academic freedom at UNZA. The study has the task of critically investigating how the true essence of academic freedom can be restored. Lastly, it is hoped that this study will provide insight for the Zambian government to be conversant with their responsibilities in academic freedom and be knowledgeable in the provision of information to address the challenges that university education in the country faces.

1.8. Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks shape this study. First is social capital, and second is resource dependence. The frameworks are based on power relations among actors in pursuit of resources. They are based on the idea that resources are derived from the network of relationships. For example, according to the social capital theory, social relationships are resources that can contribute to the growth and accumulation of human capital. Abera (2014) describes social capital as a critical asset because it can be espoused during a crisis (Abera, 2014: 21). The Sishuwa case, cited above, is an example of a crisis when animosity arises between the academy and other actors, such as the UNZA management. It may also take the form of inadequate resources to facilitate academic freedom. This implies that university and external environment interactions are critical partners in promoting academic freedom. An impoverished resource environment can negatively affect the attainment of academic freedom. Social capital guarantees

academic freedom by providing access to resources that make academic freedom tenable. In this way, network relations within the academic community and in the physical and cultural surroundings of the academy become the bedrock for the free and uninhibited pursuits of knowledge.

Therefore, social capital shapes this study by explaining how social networks between universities and external environments facilitate academic freedom and how academics can utilise social capital to exercise academic freedom. Social relationships or connections matter in enabling either positive or negative outcomes in people's lives and the functioning of social institutions (Giddens, 1984:14). When academics build relations either in their personal lives or social institutions and sustain them over time, they are capable of working together to pursue knowledge freely and radically. The social networks provide the required emotional and informational support for academics as they contend with issues confronting humanity. Social networks enable academics to receive information about funding sources, joint research, research contracts and research consultancy.

To summarise, the social capital theory provides a framework for this study by insisting that a network of relationships facilitates the acquisition of resources, providing a safety net for free expressions among academics. I, therefore, contend that academic freedom can only be thoroughly enjoyed or exercised when adequate resources can be garnered through social networks. Seasoned academics may offer information or tips to novice academics regarding how to navigate the (sometimes restrictive) climate, consultancy, research, and publication in order for them to succeed in the academic realm (Brown et al., 2006: 18). The social capital aspect of social networks is connected to academic freedom through the sharing of ideas via sources of information that arise from a network system. Durlauf & Fafchamps (2004: 42) observe that social capital entails information exchange. This implies that social networks facilitate faster and more extensive diffusion of information on funding, consultancy, and research contracts, ultimately promoting academic freedom. A university with a high degree of social capital enjoys academic freedom in full (Subramanian *et al.*, 2002: 66). In the following paragraphs, I contextualise

the second theory that informs the content and approach of this study, the Resource Dependency Theory (RDT).

The RDT, as it is known, holds that an institution's longevity is dependent on its ability to obtain needed resources from the external environment. According to Van Witteloostuijn and Boon (2006: 409), RDT establishes relationships to get resources. It is founded on the assumption that organizations rely on other players in the proximate 'task environment' to gain access to resources. Therefore, an organisation must access resources outside its boundaries to survive. Pfeffer & Salancik (1978: 256) similarly contend that resources are essential to an institution's survival because resources' access to and control is based on power relations. Availability of resources improves the organisation's capacity to compete against other organisations and determine its autonomy. Hence, the university's engagement with the outside world is important to fulfilling the primary duties of teaching, research, and community work.

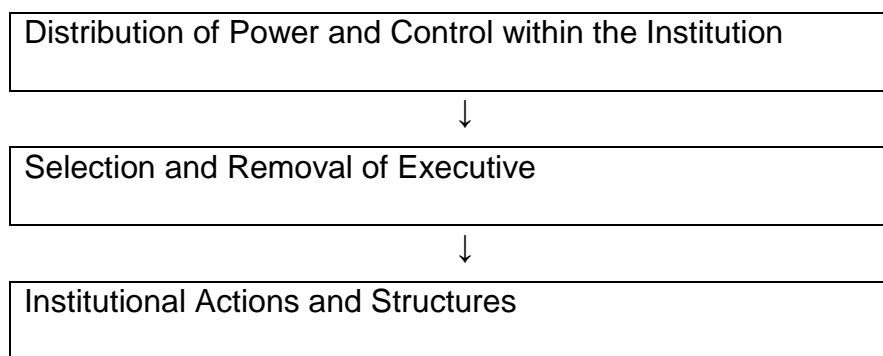
The theory assumes that since academics do not usually control the resources, they need to carry out their work, they must adopt specific strategies to sustain access to essential resources. By networking with many stakeholders, institutions try to reduce dependency on one source of resources. The RDT asserts that an institution's longevity depends on power to control resource allocation. Its central assumption is that organisations will use various strategies to manage their resource dependences and achieve great freedom to reduce uncertainty in the flow of resources from their environment. These assumptions have direct implications for academic freedom concerning teaching and research.

If universities are to make decisions about teaching and research without influence from politicians, benefactors, and the general public, they require financial independence. However, in Zambia, public institutions are heavily reliant on state funding, donor money, and foreign partnerships. As things stand, academic freedom is in grave danger in the classroom and laboratory. Thus, I chose resource dependency theory as the theoretical approach on which to build my arguments.

Given the preceding, one can argue that the degree of academic freedom is influenced by the resources available to higher education institutions. According to Menand (1996:77), academic freedom relies on the integrity and autonomy of its faculty members.

Thus, dependence on essential resources impacts the behavior of organizations, and that organizational choices and actions may be interpreted based on the specific dependency scenario (Nienhuser, 2008:10-11). An institution of higher learning, such as UNZA, depends on its environment. The institution's access to resources determines how it will take up, resist, or contextualise the issues that it confronts. To sum up the scenario, Pfeffer & Salancik (1978) contend that organizations are embroiled in an ongoing struggle for discretion and freedom while being subjected to limitation and external control.

Figure 1: Environmental Effects on Institution



[Adapted from Pfeffer & Salancik (1978: 229)]

The figure clearly shows that an institution's behaviour is influenced by its environment. A closer examination of the vertical relationship between these criteria indicates how they all contribute to an institution's independence. The balance of power influences academic freedom decisions and activities. This appears to imply that the type of a university's internal organisation determines how it protects its members' academic freedom.

External forces, according to the RDT, are an undesired source of limitation. According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) in most instances action is not possible without constraints, which can make decision-making easier. Understanding how the university limits its faculty's academic freedom necessitates an understanding of the concept of constraint. RDT enables independent behaviour in the environment. Reduced reliance on the outside environment also protects the right of the university community to free expression. To evaluate the basis for academic freedom, academic endeavours are also weighed against the instrumental value, ethical standards, and culture of a free or non-free society.

1.9. Research Methodology

A comprehensive and lengthy discussion of the research methodology used in this research is found in Chapter 4, however, I provide below a brief description of the methodological orientation of this study.

The study adopted a qualitative research approach. According to Holloway (1997: n.p), the qualitative research approach lies in the interpretive approach to social reality. Qualitative research is a type of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret their experiences and the world they live in. Researchers use qualitative approaches to explore the perspectives and experiences of the people they study. Merriam (2009: 23) states that the qualitative research approach is a pursuit to comprehend a phenomenon from the respondent's point of view as he or she makes meaning of his or her world. Human language and lived experiences are the bedrock of the information and insight that qualitative research seeks to obtain (Merriam, 2009: 24). According to Boeije (2010:11), qualitative research seeks to comprehend and explain social phenomena through the lenses of individuals' perceptions.

Qualitative researchers typically discuss respondents' perceptions to understand created realities, per Glesne (1999:5). This one-institution study lends itself to a qualitative methodology (Neutens & Rubinson, 2010:319). The qualitative approach stresses social context (Burns & Grove, 2003:247). It evaluates cultures and groupings. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) argue qualitative research provides real-life accounts. In this qualitative study, academics and academic leaders describe the state of academic freedom at UNZA.

1. Paradigmatic Orientation

This study uses interpretivism. The interpretivist paradigm explores how and why influence and impact occur (Deetz, 1996: 191). My study isn't rigid. I observe reality from participants, mainly community or cultural members. As an interpretivist, I employ academics' perspectives to interpret facts. Interpretivism explains the context and implies reality is socially constructed (Willis, 2007:16). Due to the socially created reality, academics must cultivate tight researcher-subject relationships. This allows me to effectively analyze UNZA's academic freedom. I also chronicle academic and academic

leader experiences through written texts and face-to-face interviews. Interpretivism relies on participants' views and experiences (Thanh & Thanh, 2015:24).

2. Research Design

This study's research design addresses the research issue through planning, conducting, and assembling the analysis (Mouton, 2000:57). "Research design" comprises approaches for boosting the study's validity (Polit & Beck, 2010:74). Burns & Grove (2001:795) call it an analytical structure. Polit and Hungler (2003:795) describe research as a plan. This study seeks to investigate how academics and academic leaders view academic freedom at UNZA. The study required a qualitative phenomenological research design. This design describes academics' and leaders' academic freedom experiences (Polit & Beck, 2010:260). Brewerton and Millward (2001:224) say phenomenology's greatest strength is its capability to elicit in-depth knowledge of individuals' lived experiences. Manamela (2009:90) Like Cohens (2004:402), it examines an experience's structure from multiple perspectives, sides, and views. I use phenomenology to learn how participants saw their environment (Charlesworth, 2000:9). My research focuses on participants' lived experiences; hence a phenomenological approach is best for data collection and interpretation. The design allows me to look within and outside a single academic.

3. Data Generation Procedures

Qualitative research uses many data collection methods and instruments. Ritchie et al. (2013:3) list qualitative data collection approaches as semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. This inquiry included semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The interviewer asks open-ended questions regarding a given topic (Patton, 2002: 342). So, I used semi-structured interviews to investigate perceptions of the practice of academic freedom. Face-to-face interviews were the best method for the study's issue, which required accurate personal information and attitudes toward academic freedom (Denscombe, 2007: 174). Interviews let me acquire data for analysis that questionnaires couldn't. By interrogating interviewees, I got more information. I created open-ended interview questions to ensure consistency across primary and secondary research inquiries. The list of questions helped me stay on track during the interview. Instead of following them in order, I took a semi-structured, flexible approach

to my interviews. Semi-structured interviews are social contacts between me and participants, so I might follow up on relevant comments or adjust the order of questions based on responses. Fluid interviews may introduce unexpected subjects while still answering the study question. In qualitative research, much can be documented.

This investigation included document analysis. Qualitative research uses various sources to better comprehend key phenomena (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003: 124). Documents were utilized to supplement interview data to better understand academic freedom at UNZA. I chose relevant documents for my study to examine academics' and leaders' perceptions of academic freedom. I reviewed UNZA documents: the UNZA Strategic Plan, Research Policy and Intellectual Property Rights, Research Policy Implementation Manual, and UNZA Calendar. I also reviewed National Policies: The Educating our Future, the Zambian Constitution, and the Zambia Higher Education Act were among them. Educating our Future (1996). I reviewed the documents in their entirety to acquire a broader perspective.

4. Target Population

A research study's intended conclusion is drawn from the study's intended target population. Oso & Onen (2009) define a target population as the entire study environment. To establish who belongs in the target population, it is necessary to specify the criteria by which people are included or excluded. Only those UNZA academics and academic leaders who have been working full-time for more than five years were included in this study. In terms of location, the research was restricted to the School of Education and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

5. Sampling Technique and Sample size

Sampling is selecting a portion of a population to represent it (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 1998:250). The study sample is a subset of the population (Polit & Hungler, 1999:227). This research involved a subset of the population. This study used purposeful sampling. I chose a 30-person sample since it would provide enough qualitative data. UNZA scholars and academic leaders with the requisite credentials, experience, and knowledge were chosen as participants. This was in keeping with Rwegoshora's (2006:26) notion that the researcher should select an appropriate sample size. Because qualitative

generalizations focus on quality, not quantity (Ibid). In a qualitative study, the sample size is chosen based on whether it provides enough qualitative data.

1.10. Limitation of the Study

Best & Kahn (2006: 122) define limitation as those conditions beyond the researcher's control that may restrict the study's conclusions. In this respect, Ngoma (2006: 8) argues that limitations are shortcomings that may adversely affect the study results' usefulness. They affect the research results' validity and reliability. In other words, they are possible challenges in a study that are essentially outside one's control due to restricted funds, research design choices, statistical model requirements, or other variables.

The most notable limitation in this study was time since it is well known that in current times, everyone is looking for ways to increase their income. Nevertheless, I was able to plan appointments with academics based on their availability, and I was willing to postpone appointments in unforeseen circumstances. Another limitation of the study was insufficient literature on academic freedom in Zambia. In this study, I observed that the sources of information relevant to this study's topic to strengthen the literature review were scanty.

Due to both the interviewer and the interviewee's mood, I was aware that face-to-face experiences could often produce different outcomes. Therefore, this required that interviews be replicated throughout the study process. This, in turn, created some difficulties in terms of the resources available, such as time and finance, to allow the research process to be replicated. However, Reis, Amorim & Melao (2017: 277) recommend that a researcher ensures that the study is as authentic as possible by gathering data from multiple sources. Thus, in my study, I gathered data from academic leaders and academics using semi-structured interviews and a documentary review of UNZA policy documents and Zambian national policies.

The uneasiness resulting from a tape recorder in front of interviewees is another perceived limitation, as they can feel awkward getting their voices captured. However, given the emphasis on privacy and confidentiality, during data collection, participants

participated wholeheartedly. However, I did everything possible to mitigate the influence of these possible limitations on the study's quality and value.

1.11 Delimitation of the Study

In the simplest terms, delimitation of a study is the limitation consciously set by the researcher. It explains the researcher's boundaries for the study so that its aims and objectives do not become impossible to realise (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019:157). This research work was qualitative and focused on academics and academic leaders, i.e., teaching staff of UNZA (primary respondents). This implies that students and non-teaching staff were excluded from the research. Furthermore, the participative academic staff on this research are only full-time ones who have been at UNZA for more than five years between 2013 and 2018.

In space, this research work is delimited to UNZA, the country's oldest higher learning institution. Other old or new public universities were not included. The choice of this public higher learning institution is influenced by the fact that it is the first and largest public university. Therefore, it provides more experience and rich information for academic freedom given that its vision: 'the pursuit of knowledge drives an eminent university, innovation and social responsiveness' essentially affirms its commitment to academic freedom. As Bell (2010: 9) points out, it is difficult to generalise the findings of such a study, limited to the analysis and description of a phenomenon at a single public university. Any effort to generalise this study's findings should be considered with a view of adaptability. This means that other public universities operating under the same circumstances or in a similar situation could compare their decision-making to the case of UNZA. I chose to use, among other validation techniques, a rich narrative description which, according to Creswell (2013:252), provides scope for transmitting findings or information to a different setting. It also helps determine whether the results can be transferred based on what is known as 'shared characteristics.' In addition, I only used a sample of 30 participants because qualitative studies recommend a small number of participants to maximise the richness of the information.

1.12 Organisation of the Study

The organisational structure of this research work is discussed in this section. This thesis is divided into seven chapters, and each chapter has a significant value for the current study. The chapters are outlined as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction and Background of the Study

Introduction and Background of the Study describes the motives and commitment to this research work, explores the study's background, and presents the study's problem statement; the aim and specific objectives of the study are systematically presented; the significance of the study is explained. Finally, this chapter briefly discusses the research methodology, design and procedures, and theoretical frameworks. It also presents the definition of critical concepts, the study's delimitation, and its outline.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature review establishes the basis of the research in detail concerning the relevant precedent literature. In this chapter, I reviewed the literature on academic freedom and all that it entails in the context of higher education. In addition, other scholars' perspectives were discussed.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

This chapter identifies two theoretical frameworks that underpin the study; 'the social capital theory and 'the resource dependence theory' are integrated to gain insight into the critical study of academics' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

The research methodology covers all the relevant issues of the qualitative research approaches to be followed in this study. This chapter includes the rationale for empirical research for the qualitative approaches for this study, research paradigm, research design, research methods, selection of participants/respondents/sampling, data collection, data analysis, measures for trustworthiness, and ethical measures.

Chapter Five: Presentation of research findings

Chapter five (5) forms the pinnacle of the study. First, it presents the research findings following the thread line of research questions. Then, it presents findings from the data

collected in a thick narrative supported by excerpts from participants' interviews and documents.

Chapter Six: Discussion of research findings

Chapter six (6) is directly linked to the previous chapter, discussing the findings presented in chapter five (5). Research findings are discussed in line with the thread line of research questions, the study's theoretical frameworks, and the literature review. The outcome is a textural description of the phenomenon under investigation.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter provides the conclusion and recommendations of the study. Referring to the research aim and objectives and reflecting on the research findings, a summarised note is presented in this chapter. It opens new priorities and avenues for this research.

In addition to that, I will provide a personal reflection on her research experience. Finally, I also discuss the detailed contributions of the study to the theory and the body of knowledge. Therefore, recommendations are developed for the university's management, community, and future researchers.

1.13 Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a roadmap for exploring academics' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA. I have also justified the conducting of research through the aims and objectives and the significance of the study. Finally, I gave insight into the study's contribution to higher education improvement in public universities in Zambia. The next chapter focuses on diverse literature regarding academic freedom to answer the central question: *"how do UNZA academics perceive academic freedom?"*

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to frame the subject under consideration in my research within the conceptual and theoretical literature on academic freedom. The first portion of this chapter provides background information on the subject. First, in historicizing the construct of academic freedom, I trace the concept's origin, movement, and development through the years. Second, the research problem, the scant attention paid to Zambian academics' perceptions of academic freedom, is contextualized in the second part of the corpus of literature on academic freedom. Third, I look at the minimal amount of research that has been done on how faculty members view academic freedom. Finally, I contend that the present research was necessary because there is a paucity of literature investigating the viewpoints of academics on academic freedom and that there was a pressing need to do so. In the last portion of this chapter, I will summarize the literature review findings and point out any existing knowledge gaps.

2.2 Historicizing Academic Freedom

This section of the review provides a brief history of academic freedom, foregrounding my claims in the data and analysis chapters. Academic freedom has a convoluted history. It has always been a subject of contention, even at universities with strong historical roots. Historically, authorities in both the church and the state have suppressed academic freedom and intellectual inquiry (Altbach, 2001:209). Academic freedom has been promoted in a variety of ways over the ages, and it is crucial to understand how this concept has evolved and varied over time. This sets the stage for the addition of the voices from the Zambian academics and academic leaders. The current state of knowledge on academic freedom has a population gap because the voices from the Zambian academe are missing. Thus, this study will aim to supply an enhanced understanding of academic freedom through the eyes of Zambian academics, hence an assessment of the different historical narratives of its growth is required.

1. Academic Freedom in Ancient Greece

Tamirat (2015:22) attributes the beginnings of academic freedom to ancient Greece, notably the lives and philosophies of luminaries such as Socrates and his student Plato. He goes on to explain that in the fourth century B.C., the philosophical teachings of ancient Athens supplied the fundamental foundation for academic freedom (Tamirat, 2015: 22). Socrates' principal reason for issuing this message, according to Downs (2009:6), was a commitment to studying and expressing the truth independently of peer pressure and conventional knowledge. Socrates stated that rather than stop poisoning young minds with his philosophy teachings. The pursuit of truth for its own sake was at the heart of the mission of the University of Ancient Athens and ancient Greek thinkers like Socrates.

As previously stated, the widespread notion of higher education to an end—the pursuit of knowledge—is not a new phenomenon. This idea was also important to the first Athenian Academy's teachings. Athenian Academy members had access to lecturers who were willing to confront, question, and criticise traditional wisdom about how to educate their kids effectively. They were prepared to bear any costs associated with upholding this commitment. They agreed to give their all, even if it meant their lives. Seeking truth and knowledge was essential to the teachings of ancient Greek philosophers and, by extension, to the *raison d'être* of the modern academy.

Tamirat claims that academic freedom can be traced back to Ancient Greek culture (2015:22). This concept helped people seek information independently of peer pressure and other pressures. Botsford (1998:5) cites Antony Andrews' research into ancient Greek civilisation as evidence of this knowledge. Andrews argued that a Greek would respond that his people were exceptional because they were free, unlike the barbarians. With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that one of the most remarkable characteristics of ancient Greece was its capacity for unrestricted, expansive thought unfettered by myth or authority. The Greeks had numerous claims, including the acute vision of their painters, the exquisite beauty of their poetry, and their finest prose. Another virtue was their willingness to think freely and consider alternative perspectives.

Furthermore, Botsford (1998:5) notes that in ancient Greece, the institutions that we now call universities arose as educational free markets for academics who were given the freedom to examine, question, and oppose the established order. Socrates was able to criticise the state and its important persons for a long time. Despite inciting Athens' young during a period of significant political instability, he was accused of not trusting in the state's gods (Tamirat, 2015:22).

As the preceding discussion on academic freedom in ancient Greece proved, academic freedom has clearly always been a contentious issue, especially in universities with rich historical traditions. The Athenian Academy has served as a model for generations of researchers and educational theorists due to its emphasis on open inquiry and free ideas. Academic freedom, or the unrestricted pursuit of truth and knowledge for its own sake, was a primary priority for these players. The unrestricted pursuit of knowledge was both the cornerstone concept and a critical component of any modern academy.

2. Academic Freedom in the Medieval European Universities

While contemporary universities originated in the twentieth century, the concept of higher education stretches back to the Middle Ages in Europe. Scott describes the universitas as "a corporation or guild of masters (professors) and scholars (students)" (2006:6). During the Middle Ages, Italy (Bologna) and France (Paris) established the first universities, which are often considered the cradle of the modern intellect (Botsford, 1998:8). This suggests that the gatherings of intellectuals at universities were entirely unplanned and uninitiated by any religious entity. These European universities were the first of their type, dating back to the Middle Ages (Altbach, 2001). Masingi (2006) concurs, claiming that the first institutions in Paris and Bologna reflect two unique notions of university establishment. Because students hired professors, university education evolved from the Bologna model. Clerics, on the other hand, were important to establishing the universities that arose from the Paris tradition.

According to Tamirat, a group of mediaeval university magistrates and scholars, i.e., masters and students, were viewed as a particular sort of guild to define and propagate a peculiar good, knowledge (2015:25). They spent most of their time teaching students in academic, religious, government, and occupational disciplines (Tamiat, 2015). As

religious schools, it is understandable that mediaeval universities were employed to train attorneys, doctors, and priests. Despite emphasising scholarly and religious education, mediaeval universities were not immune to political involvement. Medieval universities were essentially educational institutions that applied Aristotelian logic (philosophy) and dialectic (discussion) to Christian dogma, an approach known as scholasticism that was regarded at the time as the pinnacle of philosophic achievement (Scott, 2006: 8-9). Undergraduates were taught the Scholastic method of categorising and combining acceptable components of biblical truth. St. Thomas Aquinas was a major proponent of scholasticism, which sought to reconcile Christian faith and reason by introducing cutting-edge pedagogical practises and a scientific approach to investigating the entire breadth of human knowledge, including the flood of new information from the Islamic world. In addition, the Seven Liberal Arts were discussed in class. Language, rhetoric, logic, mathematics, music, geometry, and astronomy were among them (Scott, 2006). Many individuals believe that universities in the Middle Ages were more conducive to intellectual independence (Tamirat, 2015:26). That's why they took a scholarly approach, a type of academic freedom.

According to Botsford (1998:7), many academics today strive to determine the truth of a philosophical assertion or religious doctrine by putting reason to work and employing the dialectical approach of syllogism to balance the issues at hand. Because Abélard used this method so well, his seminars were often crowded with eager students, and he is still regarded as the "herald of free thinking" today. He avoided using authority and instead approached each problem by looking for flaws. That is why he encouraged his students' freedom and openness to learning.

The concept of academic freedom, according to Keith (1997:3), may be traced back to this autonomy of mediaeval European institutions, where it existed in the form of institutional academic freedom. He suggests that this liberty arose due to a struggle between the Church and the State over newly developed mediaeval institutions (or universities). These institutions were generally forerunners in developing new areas of academic autonomy; they were typically self-governing master's programmes with enough ability to appoint faculty, create course requirements, and grant degrees (Keith,

1997:3). This remark emphasises how much authority mediaeval institutions enjoyed in areas such as governance, faculty appointments, curriculum creation, and degree conferral.

Tamirat (2015:26) contends that mediaeval universities were moral and legal organisations independent of the pope, emperor, lords, and city authorities and worthy of long-term preservation. According to Bostock (2002:20), universities were allowed autonomy in the Middle Ages in exchange for a vow not to preach atheism or heresy in their classrooms. It was also made feasible for Europeans to vote for their rectors, hence increasing tax revenue. Scott (2006:8), for example, emphasises that despite challenging the Church or the State in their teaching and scholarship, the arts and higher studies faculties in Northern European institutions were given significant autonomy.

According to Tamirat (2015:27), mediaeval scholars who were also ardent Christians did not believe themselves that they had authority to share the truth as they understood it. Furthermore, because of the resurgence of ancient literature and philosophy, the humanistic thought of the time considered Cicero and Plato as challenges to religion. The religious institution was eventually defeated because the university allied with the church and battled against the new information. Humanism was finally recognised by academics in the 16th century.

Furthermore, most mediaeval universities were awarded legal charters by the Roman Catholic Church and several mediaeval rulers. These semi-independent institutions were accountable to the Roman Catholic Church, national monarchy, regional bishops, or municipal governments, depending on the nation and century (Scott, 2006:7). As a result, outside influences could be found even in mediaeval universities. Nonetheless, it is possible to conclude that these universities were centers of comparative intellectual freedom long before academic freedom became ubiquitous. Because the main philosophical goal of mediaeval universities was to pursue heavenly truth and learning, freedom to do so was a primary priority. Based on this, one can argue that the universities of mediaeval Europe were the first to provide genuine examples of academic freedom. They were granted independence by the state or a monarchy. As a result, they were

permitted to select their own professors and set their own admission and graduation criteria.

3. Academic Freedom and the Germanic Experience

Universities in the 17th and 18th centuries did not make substantial contributions to the search for truth and knowledge due to a lack of openness to new ideas of the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment, as well as the preservation of a "limited and archaic curriculum and techniques" (Tamirat, 2015: 28). In the nineteenth century, a new wave of institutions formed, deriving inspiration from the tenets of mediaeval universities as they began afresh. According to Geuna (1996: 27), in the Middle Ages, scholars who were also fervent Christians believed that the faith and the church had already revealed the truth, thus they felt they had no right to teach it as they viewed it.

Wilhelm von Humboldt, Johann Fichte, and Friedrich Schleiermacher were all idealists who helped set up the University of Berlin in 1810 under the banner of the new humanistic university ideology that would come to characterise the modern German university (Paletschek, 2001: 37). According to Scott (2006:20), there were two primary incentives for advocating this reform. Enlightenment-era professors and lords in Prussia promoted the idea of a dynamic modern university after noticing academic stagnation in pre-existing German colleges. Alternatively, the Prussian army's defeat by Napoleon and the subsequent closure of Jena and Halle universities could explain the phenomenon.

The German government considered the university as a learning centre as well as a means of building the country's cultural and national identity, and these two justifications reinforce one another (Tamirat, 2015:29). It was also projected that Prussia would be the driving force behind Germany's unification as a nation-state in the late 1800s by developing a powerful military and a well-educated civil service (Scott, 2006: 20). Furthermore, according to Dewey (2004:100-101), German governments believed that a consistent emphasis on education was the most effective way of protecting and sustaining national legitimacy and control. Academic freedom may be traced back to Humboldt's teachings at the University of Berlin, and it has since functioned as a guiding concept for universities throughout Germany and Europe. Tamirat (2015: 29) explains that first, the unity of the research and teaching missions confirmed the importance of original

scholarship. Second, the principle of academic freedom developed. Consisting of *Lernfreiheit* (the concept of "freedom to learn"), which allowed students to pursue any course of study, and *Lehrfreiheit* (the concept of "freedom to teach"), which allowed professors free inquiry regarding their lines of research and teaching, this principle was protected by the state. The third is the principle of the centrality of the arts and sciences.

According to Humboldt's ideology, the modern concept of academic freedom, which originated in the nineteenth century, stressed the blending of classroom instruction with individual investigation. In agreement with Humboldt's ideology, Marginson (2008) asserts that academic research should be performed for its own sake rather than just for practical application. The freedom of teaching and research is seen as the defining principle and effective method of operation of the German university, yet this golden university ideology can only be secured if it is adequately preserved. This assertion is predicated on the underlying premise that academic institutions regarded (and continue to regard) scientific and scholarly investigation as never-ending activities. As a result, they were constantly looking for new opportunities. Because scientific and scholarly inquiry was unending, colleges were established to pursue such endeavours (Marginson, 2008: 3). We can argue that Humboldt was particularly interested in the conditions required for research and scholarship because he valued individual freedom and intellectual challenge (Marginson, 2008: 3). We might deduce from this that Humboldt's key concerns in higher education were autonomy and independence.

According to Tamirat (2015: 30), Germans in the nineteenth century were particularly interested in the freedom of scholars and students. However, they failed to protect staff and students from disruptive statements and acts from individuals outside the university's borders. Masingi (2006: 12) claims that universities in Germany were largely government institutions because education was the government's top concern. As a result, the German university professor was a member of the German civil service. Their working conditions, however, were better than those of the average government employee. The conditions were comparable to those of a judge in a free country. The professor was bound only by the facts, just as the judge was obligated only by the law.

Although the importance of ensuring academic freedom in the classroom and laboratory cannot be emphasised, violations of this right were widespread. German professors were legally government employees, it was widely assumed that German universities had a high degree of autonomy. It is a misconception to believe that German academics in the eighteenth century had complete academic freedom in the modern sense.

Paletschek (2001:44) makes a similar argument, claiming that the Führerprinzip (This is a leadership principle) supplanted university self-management once the Nazi regime's National Socialist and authoritarian control came to power in 1933. As a result, several Jewish and left-wing staff were fired. These restrictions affected between 1,100 and 1,500 people in Germany, or around 15% of the academic staff (Paletschek, 2001:44). To that goal, the regime interfered in the employment of new professors and advocated for the appointment of National Socialist-influenced academics (Paletschek, 2001: 44-45). As can be seen, the National Socialists degraded university academics who were primarily concerned with teaching humanistic university principles, claiming that such training was unrelated to real life and represented the despised liberal science.

Even though 19th-century German universities were critical in developing the modern concept of academic freedom (which is embedded in the concepts of *Lernfreiheit* and *Lehrfreiheit*), it is acceptable to claim that abuses of this freedom persisted. The nationalisation goal of delivering service to the nation-government states was the basic driver of German institutions, which contradicts the university's core mission of pursuing truth and knowledge.

4. Academic Freedom in the USA

Academic freedom as we know it now originated in Europe in the late 19th century and expanded to the United States in the early 20th. This will serve as a framework for a discussion of the origins and evolution of academic freedom in the United States. It has been argued by Altbach (2001:13) that the early American institutions, which include Harvard, Yale, Chicago, Georgetown, and others, prioritised religious education and produced a small number of elites over scientific advancement (Wilson, 2014:73). For instance, the first Harvard Statutes (1646) imposed severe limitations on academic freedom by making the Bible the only source of study.

Some say that the roots and evolution of academic freedom can be traced all the way back to the American War of Independence. Masingi (2006: 14) asserts that before the conflict, most universities had some sort of religious affiliation or were created by a certain church. Academics who wanted to work in such colleges tended to be attracted to and hired by a particular university primarily because they shared the faith of that university's administration. As a result, there were fewer incidents and less concern about academic freedom before the war, leaving no room to violate the professor's rights.

According to Altbach (2001: 15), the unprecedented adaptability of the modern American university has been shaped by three key causes. That's the liberal arts from England, the scientific method in Germany, free education in the United States, and a commitment to serving one's country (Altbach, 2001: 15). Moreover 9,000 American students attended German institutions in the 19th century, according to Keith (1997:6). This claim makes it clear that Germany has had a significant impact on higher education in the United States. According to Altbach (2001: 14–15), after spending time in the intellectual "Mecca" of Germany, these Americans came back with a deeper respect for the methods and ideas they had learned. They brought ideas, such as the importance of academic freedom, back to the United States. Universities in the United States needed to discover new facts after universities in the country had worked to preserve established ones (Keith, 1997: 6). American notions of academic freedom and research as central to the university system can be traced back to German practise.

The early republican colleges, as noted by Scott (2006:16), were thought to provide a liberal arts education in the European model. Scott adds that they believed that providing students with a liberal arts education was essential to achieving the democratisation goal for people (2006:16). By the 19th century, however, the focus shifted to serving the public by making experts' expertise and academic research more widely available (Scott, 2006: 23). Following the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890, the students focused on obtaining a technical education in the agricultural and mechanical sciences (Tamirat, 2015: 33). For example, democratisation and public service to the people of the nation-state were initially advocated in the 1800s as a mission in the pioneering American universities like

Jefferson's University of Virginia, as noted by Scott (2006:15). As Scott (2006: 15) notes, this aim was reflected in the official civil service mission of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Given the foregoing, it follows that the idea of state colleges serving the public good was a natural one during the 19th century's formative years. U.S. academic institutions responded to "The Wisconsin Idea" (1904) by designating the University of Wisconsin to serve as a mouthpiece for the people of that rural state (Scott, 2006: 25). As a result, many public institutions of higher education elevated community service to the same level of importance as academic instruction and scientific inquiry. In contrast, the popular values of higher education were the pursuit of truth wherever it led, which was at odds with the mission of service to society. However, this did not negate the fact that universities had a responsibility to serve the public. Instead, it implied that practicality was an unintended byproduct of a more fundamental search for truth. Scott (2006: 24) adds that putting all of one's eggs in the public service basket ran against the academy's values and was a genuine concession to corporate influence or the industrial status quo (Scott, 2006: 24). Similarly, Altbach (2001: 28) argues that universities are not isolated academies because they play an important role in society through their training, research, and service to governmental and non-governmental funding bodies.

After WWII, the trend of prioritising public service over expanding the boundaries of knowledge accelerated. Most governments concluded that fostering a large graduate population through rapid expansion of higher education was essential to economic success (Botsford, 1998: 12). Botsford (1998: 12) adds that many Americans in the wake of the Soviet Union's successful Sputnik launch in 1957 mistakenly assumed that the country's scientific progress was the consequence of a dramatic increase in the number of university graduates. In keeping with this, Botsford (1998:13) claims that after Sputnik, American universities had been playing catch-up with the number of graduates from Soviet universities. Germans were giving up on their intellectual principles and creating "campuses" to compete with the United States. A student's education was viewed as an investment with the highest possible return, while governments recognised its centrality to their economic growth.

Tamirat (2015: 35) notes that because America is thought to be the first democratic nation in the contemporary age, America was not tolerant of dissension, particularly in the intellectual realm. Academic freedom was violated repeatedly between the 1830s and the 1880s, as documented by Masingi (2006: 14). Academics were fired from several institutions for expressing controversial views on topics such as slavery, secession, and Darwinism. Even throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there was a persistent disregard for academic freedom (Tamirat, 2015:35). Due to their sympathies and loyalty toward Communism, many professors were hounded and sometimes fired during the Cold War. In contrast, other scholars were targeted for no other reason than their reluctance to publicly defend their ideological stance. Could such severe restrictions on free speech and scholarly inquiry be the norm at UNZA? This cloudiness raises a question mark, making it worthwhile to seek more information.

For instance, the violation of academic freedom in a U.S. A state-controlled university is best epitomised when Bertrand Russell, a renowned academic, was precluded from teaching at the City College of New York. This scenario happened when the bishop who was managing the Protestant Episcopal Church drafted a letter to all New York newspapers discrediting Russell immediately after his appointment. Botsford (1998: 8-9) considers what the bishop wrote against Russell's appointment: What does it say about schools when they present as a true philosopher, a well-known campaigner against religion and morals, and a fervent proponent of adultery to the next generation? Does anyone who actually cares about the state of our country advocate for the promotion of such viewpoints in our educational institutions? He maintains that some people were so intellectually and ethically deficient that they saw no problem with Russell's nomination (Botsford, 1998: 9). Russell was a revered and outspoken supporter of free thought and sexual freedom, which appears to be the main implication of the college's decision to prevent him from teaching there. This example demonstrates the inherent difficulties in practising academic freedom at state-run universities, particularly in the United States. Given that UNZA is a state-controlled university, the academic freedom restrictions at UNZA are a perfect fit for the case study's emphasis on the American experience.

Concern among academics about the dismissals, as recorded by Fuchs (1963:438), corresponding with the belief that a national organisation of college and university academics, like organisations of physicians and lawyers, would be beneficial. Thus, according to Fuchs (1963: 438), the American Association of University Academics (AAUP) was founded in 1915 by a group of highly recognised professors from America's finest universities. As a result, the first and modern declaration on academic freedom was issued in the United States in 1915, according to the AAUP General Report of the Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure Committee (Tamirat, 2015: 36). This had nothing to do with an employer-employee relationship. As soon as an academic was hired, they were given professional obligations. The primary accountability of an academic was to the general public and to the standards of his or her area. Furthermore, because the institution functioned as a social hub, it was accountable to the entire public.

Although American colleges adopted the concept of academic freedom from their German counterparts, they did not follow the text of the legislation. Instead, it was reshaped to fit the contexts of the United States by eliminating *lernfreiheit*, or student academic freedom, while preserving *lehrfreiheit*, or teacher and researcher academic freedom, and by including academics' freedom to express themselves publicly outside the confines of the university. This concept was reinvented by Americans as the ideal of unrestrained academic freedom. This liberty, according to Hamilton (1995:159), assures that faculty members can do research, teach, and communicate freely within and outside of the university without fear of retaliation from the administration. Academic freedom, as promoted by the American Association of University Professors and other organisations, was expected to aid universities in carrying out their three major roles of teaching, research, and public service (Hamilton, 1995: 164). As a result, academic freedom was characterized by three tenets: (1) the right to teach; (2) the right to do research and publicly disclose the results; and (3) the right to express oneself outside of the classroom freely. These are essential for faculty members to fulfil their duties within the context of the university's larger goals.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is frequently credited with fostering a culture of academic freedom. Overall, the decision of the United States

Supreme Court (USSC) to affirm academic freedom as a human right guaranteed by the first amendment to the United States Constitution is a watershed moment in the history of this notion in the United States (USC).

The concept of protecting academic freedom in the United States can be traced back to the Germanic culture. It was changed to conform to American standards. The USC protected the AAUP's informal endorsement of academic freedom, which led to its formal recognition as a human right. Most academic institutions around the world consider the lack of legislative recognition of academic freedom to be one of their most serious concerns. This paper intends to put light on several challenges afflicting Zambia's higher education sector, including this one.

5. The 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure

The AAUP was established to ensure that academic freedom was upheld in universities across the country. Wilson (2014: 132) considers the 1915 AAUP Statement of Principles to be the most significant American concept of academic freedom. The ideological framework established by the 1915 Declaration can be traced back to the AAUP's later pronouncements. Subsequently, a group of scholars from various fields came together to defend and expand academic freedom across the country. According to Precious (2014: 19), the AAUP's Second Annual Meeting, held on December 31, 1915, and January 1, 1916, in Washington, D.C., officially accepted the 1915 Declaration of Principles, a statement of principles on academic freedom and academic tenure.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) was one of the organisations that met in 1925 at a meeting convened by the American Council on Education to develop a more concise statement of values regarding academic freedom and tenure (Metzger, 1990: 26). The 1925 Conference Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure was adopted by the American Association of Colleges (ACC), (now the Association of American Colleges and Universities) and the AAUP (the American Association of University Professors) in the years that followed (Wilson, 2014: 179). While the AAC presidents were pleased with the 1925 Statement of Academic Freedom and Tenure Principles, AAUP members were dissatisfied because it was perceived as too much of a

compromise (Metzger, 1990: 26). Furthermore, Wilson (1914: 180) claims that the phrase "treason" in particular, enraged many representatives during the anti-subversive crusades of the 1920s and 1930s, putting pressure on the AAUP to reconsider the proclamation. The AAUP and AAC did not reach an agreement on a better, more influential academic freedom and tenure declaration until the late 1930s.

A significant step toward establishing unrestricted academic freedom was taken in 1940. That year, the AAUP's core beliefs about academic freedom and tenure were formalised. Between 1934 and 1940, there was an ongoing series of conferences between the AAUP and the AAC. It resulted in a unanimous decision to reaffirm the values enshrined in the 1925 Conference Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure (Wilson, 2014: 196). This reiteration is known as the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure (Precious, 2014: 19). The 1940 Statement developed a "7-year rule" for tenure as the foundation for university rights to academic freedom (Precious, 2014: 19). The 1940 Statement's guiding ideals are now incorporated into the official policies of colleges and universities across the country.

The proclamation defines academic freedom in terms of three tenets (Precious, 2014: 19). According to AAUP (1940:3), the first principle includes the freedom to pursue academic interests as well as the publishing of individual scholarly discoveries. According to this principle, professors should be given complete autonomy in conducting research and publishing their findings, if it does not interfere with their other scholarly duties and responsibilities; however, academics conducting research with the expectation of financial gain should negotiate such arrangements with the appropriate university officials.

The second concept is that academics should be able to openly discuss their subjects in class. They must be careful not to include a polarising issue that is unrelated to their theme in their presentation. Academic freedom constraints imposed by the institution's religious or other aims should be clearly stated in writing at the time of appointment (AAUP, 1940:3). The final application of this principle concerns university faculty members' independence in their courses. That is, educators are allowed to teach whatever they choose as long as it is within their field of expertise. There are, however,

exceptions to this general norm. Professors have the right to teach anything they choose, but they should avoid bringing up controversial topics in class. That is why it is critical for scholars to avoid anything that is sure to provoke debate but has nothing to do with their topic.

The third principle, on the other hand, is concerned with students' freedom to express themselves both within and outside of the classroom. In this concept, however, the proclamation expresses caution regarding the rights and duties of college and university academics to their professional standing and institutions while publishing or speaking publicly. The caveats concern being factually correct, exercising self-control, showing consideration for opposing viewpoints, and being forthright about the fact that they are not representing their institution (AAUP, 1940: 3).

The American Association of University Professors issued national policy statements on academic freedom in 1915, 1925, and 1940. Academics and administrators from several universities have come together to adopt the 1940 Statement on Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure. The 1940 Declaration of Principles established by the AAUP reflected and framed the idea of academic freedom as it was typically practised by scholars. The above argues that the concept of academic freedom and the mechanisms (such as tenure and formal procedures) necessary to preserve it were advanced in new directions by The AAUP's declaration. Most current discussions still revolve around these underlying principles.

The foregoing scholarship maps the significantly illuminated terrain of academic freedom and how it has evolved since it first made its appearance in Greece. However, the scholarship does not capture critical voices from the global south on how academic freedom is experienced and articulated within spaces removed from its original conceptualization. Thus, a population gap thus exists, regarding how academics in different locales have experienced the phenomenon under study. Considering this review, a need exists to examine how academic freedom is experienced by faculty members within Sub-Saharan African universities, while recognizing how such a phenomenon might be welcomed or rejected by faculty depending on the context in which they operate. It is important to explore how academic freedom is appropriated by actors in different locales, including the academics and

academic leaders in Zambia. In addition, a study on a scale and scope of the current research study will generate insights on how academic freedom may be re-configured in relation to local realities, meanings, and contexts (Dean, 2012), while also highlighting the ways that such localizations embody universal principles in global contexts. The perceptions and experiences contained in the data chapters can enrich on-going debates about academic freedom in higher education. In addition, the insights supplied in this study, will inform the current debates on academic freedom. It is to the review of such debates and the existing gaps that I now turn in the next section.

2.3 Situating Current Debates on Perceptions of academic freedom

In this section, an attempt is made to situate the study within the current global debates on academic freedom. I review research based on academics' thoughts on academic freedom. The goal is to present a glimpse of the current understanding of the topic while also highlighting the scant attention paid to perceptions of academics from Zambia. During the twentieth century, the unrestrained search for truth was the principal purpose of academia. Whether in the classroom or the lab, academics were allowed to pursue any paths of investigation they wanted without fear of repercussions. Academic freedom refers to the idea that professors and lecturers should be permitted to follow their autonomous courses of investigation and pedagogy without influence from outside sources. Over the last decade, there has been a steady increase in the number of people who have expressed worry that the increasing commercialisation of universities threatens academic freedom. In this section,

The first focal study in this section of the review comes from Indonesia, where a group of researchers have undertaken the tale of academic freedom in the world's most populous Muslim country in the world. This research sought to uncover lecturers' understanding of academic freedom and determine the field's challenges based on their experiences. The research employed in-depth interviews as a primary source of data collection. The results yielded a rich dataset predicated on the three principal activities of academe: teaching, research, and community service. Some lecturers reported that they had varying experiences with academic freedom in Indonesia. Some asserted that they would use academic scientific considerations to choose their research foci. Still, these would be

blockaded by the administrative authority, who seldom had sound knowledge of the academic discipline, and, thus, of the core debates in the arena that called for further inquiry. The study participants also reported that they sometimes faced severe restrictions from the leadership in their university, who limited and inhibited the growth of the academic freedom of lecturers. These restrictions also manifested in reprimands for posting controversial opinion pieces in print or electronic media.

The study also unearthed very strange violations of academic freedom in this jurisdiction. This included persecution, arrest, death threats and being reported to the security forces. These violations made the researchers remark that “using persecution, arrest, and even death threats are the banalest form in the history of human civilisation” (Nunul_Huda et al., 2020, p. 4678). Restrictions on academic freedom by forces internal to the academe also seemed conspicuously prominent. Ultimately, the study showed diverse conceptualisations and articulations of academic freedom among academics in Indonesia. This diversity points to the absence of a universally comprehensive interpretation of the phenomena in this jurisdiction. Thus, academic freedom is an ambiguous concept taken up, resisted, appropriated, and articulated differently in different locales.

The implications of these findings for my study are very plain. Having heard from the Indonesian narrative, a question arises about whether the same could be said of other jurisdictions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, where the context is dissimilar and where different forces operate. Hearing from Zambian academics and their leaders would widen the scope of the global understanding of academic freedom. Thus, my study on perceptions of academic freedom can be situated alongside the Indonesian study and several other studies informed by a similar focus.

Another focal study comes from Poland, where Stachowiak-Kudła (2022) analysed three sets of forces at play in the Polish higher education arena that had direct implications for exercising academic freedom. The forces were identified as a weak legal tradition of academic freedom, a lack of legal definition of this freedom and the transition of Polish universities from the collegial to the managerial management model. The study then analysed these three factors' impact on Polish scientists' situation. Stachowiak-Kudła

argued that the absence of a legal definition of academic freedom presents an enduring challenge to which academics in this space can enjoy the freedom to pursue their teaching, research, and community service obligations.

Without a recorded definition, the Polish Constitutional Court resolves questions about the nature and scope of fundamental freedoms. This decision emphasises the importance of having the freedom to choose research topics, methodology, and publications. The freedom to access all information required for research is essential to the right to do scientific research in Poland. The ability to convey one's knowledge to others in a methodical manner is referred to as freedom of instruction.

Academic freedom has a lengthy history but has been eroded by authoritarian regimes. After periods of totalitarian rule, academic freedom had to be intermittently restored in Poland. Increased university autonomy and academic freedom were among the objectives of Poland's post-1989 higher education reforms. Constitutional protections for academic freedom were crucial during periods of democratic transition. Poland's troubled history, including partitions, World War II, and "real socialism," allowed for substantially greater academic freedom than in other European countries. Academic freedom in Poland is viewed differently than in many other European nations because it is extended to the general public and is not tied to any particular institution. Poland is notable for its unwavering commitment to historical veracity. It takes the form of a new offence, the crime against the truth.

Changes in higher education demonstrate the difficulty of maintaining academic freedom. With the *managerialization* of university administration, it has become more difficult to foster interdisciplinary, local, and public-interest research. If the public is to gain, academic freedom cannot be considered an exclusive privilege. Alexis Gibbs states this is "in the best interests of others, their future, and other futures" (2016, p. 184). Scientists' work should be characterized by expectations of accountability and efficacy (StachowiakKuda & Kuda, 2017), but [i]n cultures of measurement, audits, comparisons, segregation, and stratification, it is important to be cautious when measuring progress or success. Academic freedom permits the selection of a study topic solely regional. relevance. Academic institutions' freedom to conduct research is essential, which does

not preclude diverse approaches. Academic freedom includes choosing where and how to present one's findings. It is essential to maintain academic freedom so that professors and researchers can teach and conduct research without fear of government or institutional punishment. Academic freedom is contingent upon universities maintaining the freedom to operate independently, which is why universities were granted it.

For one important reason, the aforementioned study offers an ideal foundation for academic freedom research. This study was made possible by comparing theoretical assertions of academic freedom to the real processes, attitudes, and experiences of academics whose identities and roles have been altered as higher education continues reconfiguring in the twenty-first century. This research sheds insight on the challenges of academic freedom in higher education reform in the Global South and opens the path for future comparative academic freedom research. I will build on this and comparative research as I unearth academics' perspectives on the subject under investigation.

A third focal study by Tierney (2001:43) similarly uncovered varied views on the abrogation of academic freedom by faculty in Australian public universities. A number of the respondents provided instances of what some could consider being severe abuses of academic freedom. The study also yielded several complaints from students who believe a frigid environment has been established on campus and no longer feel free to express themselves. As a result of the need to depend on the market for financial survival, the changing nature of academic work was cited as a significant contributing factor to the cold weather. This aligns with the current study's theoretical framework: resource dependence and social capital. Indeed, resource endowments of the Zambian academy have been shown to rely increasingly on commercial sources of revenue. However, no empirical studies have explored the extent to which similar contexts, as experienced in other geopolitical spaces, may necessarily hold in the Zambian academic environment.

However, similar violations of academic freedom have been reported by various researchers around the globe. For instance, Iran has a global reputation for dubious academic freedom. A report by Human Rights Organizations Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (2012: n.p.) describes academic freedom in the Islamic Republic of Iran as concerning. The report explains how Iran restricts free speech, assembly, and

other rights on university campuses, how it sets up systems that allow authorities to deport students at will, and how it sacks graduate lecturers because of their political opinions or behaviour (ibid). According to the report, almost 600 students and several university lecturers have been detained since 2009, many of whom have been imprisoned and hundreds have been denied access to education as a result of their political participation (ibid). Women's education in Iran has also been severely restricted. In September of 2012, thirty universities made it illegal for women to major in eight subjects (engineering, nuclear physics, computer science, English literature, archaeology, and business). (ibid). Similarly, Lucas (2013: n.p.) reported that Turkey imprisoned political scientist Busra Ersanli for her political opinions (Lucas, 2013: n.p). Furthermore, the Scholars at Risk Network, an organisation that monitors academic freedom constraints around the world, has identified instances of academic freedom violations even in democratic countries such as South Africa, South Korea, and India (Scott, 2014:2). Scholars at Risk Network reported nearly fifty cases of academic freedom breaches in Thailand, Burma, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, and Kenya in 2015, according to the American Academic Freedom Foundation (2016: 3).

The Alliance for Academic Freedom (AAF) similarly reported that violations of academic freedom were considerably worse in countries like China, Russia, and a number of Arab countries where academics and students were deported, arrested, and disciplined because of the subject matter of their studies or the political opinions they held (AAF, 2016:2). They also refused to educate certain categories of people, particularly women. China, for example, is well-known for its public rejection of citizens' inherent right to free education. It imposes official censorship, imprisons outspoken scholars, and severely restricts the sharing of research findings. A classic example is the recent dismissal of Professor Xia Yeliang, an economist and free-market advocate, from Peking University for his beliefs; or Wang Peijian, a law professor and democracy advocate at Jiliang University in Zhejiang Province, who was forced to attend a "psychiatric facility" against his will because he expressed his political views on campus (AAF, 2016: 2). The world's most populous country is also known for its China is well-known for denying visas to foreign intellectuals and students (Wong, 2014: 4). For example, in 2014, Beijing imposed

travel restrictions on Andrew Nathan of Columbia University, Perry Link of the University of California at Riverside, Elliot Sperling of Indiana University, and many more (Wong, 2014: 4). Even worse, Chinese scholars who live in urban areas without an internal passport, for example, are considered "temporary residents" and hence ineligible for certain privileges, like as access to public schools beyond the primary level. Nonetheless, despite these restrictions, a lot of American colleges have established campuses, programmes, or collaborations in China, and they have always rejected China's contempt for academic freedom (The AAF, 2016: 2).

Closer to home, Kori (2016: 51) profiled the academic freedom situation in South Africa, pointing out that since apartheid the concept of "academic freedom" has not been widely accepted, and those who advocate for it are often labeled as "reactionary" or "conservative" (Kori, 2016: 51). The 1997 Higher Education Act imposed ongoing restrictions on academic freedom of expression. Even worse, subsequent revisions have eroded university academic freedom while increasing government power. The government, according to Kori, decides which universities offer specific programs, which students participate in specific programs, what courses are taught, how they are taught, and how those programs are funded. After performing an audit, the government has the authority to fire the vice chancellor and appoint a new vice chancellor to govern the university.

Similarly, a study by Kilase (2013: 185), opined that the Sudanese government has always had control over universities (Kilase, 2013: 185). Sudanese universities are not immune to official interference. The state funds the universities, selects senior administrators (Vice Chancellors), and coordinates all universities. Kilase (2013: 185) contends that unless governmental control is reduced or eliminated in favor of academic freedom and university autonomy, higher education in Sudan is likely to be in a perpetual state of transition due to political, economic, and social factors. From the aforementioned assertions, it may be concluded that political forces and agents of political change have a significant impact on universities.

Nor are these the only violations of academic freedom in the global landscape. Tamirat, (2015: 83). The current regime in Ethiopia also suppresses academic freedom According

to Tamirat, the current government has abolished tenure, freedom of study and teaching, institutional autonomy, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought because of neoliberalism, globalization, and political or ideological interference (2015: 83). A study by Schreck (2015: n.p.) also reported that Russia deported a considerable number of international academics in 2014 and 2015. In several situations, police and immigration officers fired and deported these international academics while they were conducting research at the state archives. Freedom to travel for scholarly purposes remains a significant barrier in many countries. Scholars in Ukraine and the United Kingdom have recently experienced politically driven state-sanctioned travel restrictions (AFF, 2016: 4). According to AFF (2016: 4), Egypt barred Michelle Dunne, Senior Researcher at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, from entering the country in December 2014. Dunne criticized President Abdel Fattah el-dictatorial Sisi's government while in Egypt for a conference.

Kirkpatrick (2014) also analysed the status of academic freedom in Egypt, where a French master's student in political sociology was imprisoned in July 2015 for researching the April 6 youth movement, a banned political party (2014, n.p.). Her visa was later revoked, and she was deported (Kirkpatrick, 2014, n.p.). Some Egyptian dissidents were likewise restricted from moving. This is why they felt compelled to flee their homeland. Egyptian political scientist Emad el-Din Shahin, for example, was forced to flee the nation after being convicted of spying and sentenced to death by the Egyptian government. Prof. Emad El-Din Shahin just relocated to Georgetown University (Rabou, 2015: n.p.).

Finally, the research by Marginson (1997) shows that scholars who labour under a regime of institutional autonomy favour monitored freedom (1997: 360). Academic freedom, he argues, is not a fixed universal but rather a function of the time in which it is practised. When a result, it is reasonable to expect that academic freedom will be reconsidered, if not lost, as a university's autonomy is reduced, and it becomes more of a "managed institution." An internationally competitive institution, whose goals would be set by the most powerful market participants in collaboration with governments, he claims, "puts the goal of social equality... and the ideal of free creative trade out of reach" (1997: 368). In

order to release students' full potential in the classroom, he offers an alternate model that emphasises specialize rather than uniformity.

It is clear from the above review that the matter of academic freedom has received varied attention from scholars and practitioners alike. The global scenario of the phenomena shows a complex mix of violations and conceptualizations of academic freedom that are far from universal or homogeneity. Having heard from the voices of stakeholders in Asia, Europe, Oceania and partly Sub-Saharan Africa, it is imperative that we expand the scope by hearing from the voices from the Zambian academe. Zambia offers a unique context which can provide diverse insights into how academic freedom is experienced and articulated. The gap that my study addresses is the population gap arising from the dearth of literature that captures the Zambian academics and academic leaders' perceptions of academic freedom. This will enrich the global debates on the subject matter and generate additional research and room to compare theoretical assertions on the phenomenon and actual experiences.

2.4. Academic Freedom in Diverse Political and Ideological Landscapes

The intrusion of political or ideological issues in universities is evident in many countries in Latin America and South Asia. According to Altbach's (2001: 208) study on *Academic Freedom: International Realities and Challenges*, partisan politics or ethnic issues have infiltrated academic appointments, university elections, research and publication in many Latin American and South Asian nations far from unknown in other areas of the world. Academic freedom is threatened by these pressures, typically from within universities. Extraneous disputes and non-meritocratic considerations are introduced into academic governance, teaching, and research, affecting academic relationships. Conflicts like this are not seen as having anything to do with academic freedom. However, suppose academic freedom is described as the freedom to teach, investigate, and make decisions based solely on academic standards. In that case, the introduction of political or rather factors into decision-making is a cause for concern.

The issue is especially crucial in Cuba, where the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs reports that Cuban intellectual and academic freedom is restricted and controlled. As the Castro government took power, ideology became the driving force in academia, and

academics were forced to produce work representing state interests. The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (2001:1) further reports that in a 1961 letter to academics, Fidel Castro outlined the bounds for scholarly expression and sought to limit criticism by declaring "inside the revolution, everything; without the revolution, nothing." Although this declaration enabled some debate on the implementation of revolutionary programmes, it made it very clear that criticism of the government's core beliefs was not authorised. Those who disagreed with the declaration risked losing access to state-provided benefits, such as improved jobs and education opportunities for their families. Higher education and employment possibilities have been severely constrained for a very long period. Those who wander too far from the ideological mainstream, or whose parents do, are often denied entry to prestigious colleges and then downgraded to low-paying employment. Similar measures, including the cancellation of publishing privileges, the denial of requests for international travel, the assignment to menial tasks, and sometimes even more severe punishments, are used to keep professors and researchers in line (ibid).

Describing academic practices by an ideological litmus test has undermined academia's independence and freedom of thought (The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, 2001:1). Therefore, ideological indoctrination should not permeate higher educational institutions. However, what is not evident is whether the Cuban situation is prevailing in Zambia, hence posing a gap of knowledge worth filling.

A study conducted in Ethiopia by Abebe (2014: 2) highlights that the most severe impediments to democratisation and protection of human rights are the leftist ideological tendencies of the ruling Ethiopian Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). The study notes that despite the EPRDF's outward recognition of fundamental human rights and democratic values, it runs the country with leftist-oriented ideological principles that wildly contradict the principles of freedom and democracy recognised under the constitution.

Abebe (2014:2) further asserts that one of the central ideological policies adopted by the regime is a revolutionary democracy. This does not permit the presence of an autonomous institution in the country or any actual division of powers because all government institutions are ideologically rooted in the state apparatus. He further argues

that the regime's ideological policies have influenced academic freedom and the standard of education in Ethiopia. Since universities have traditionally been the primary sources of political movements, EPRDF has used various mechanisms to curtail political movements in universities. One of the drastic steps taken by the regime to undermine academic freedom in the country was the dismissal of 41 highly qualified academics from Addis Ababa University in 1993 (Abebe, 2014:2).

Accordingly, students in Ethiopia are also forced to register for party membership. Once they become party members, they stop criticising the government and are expected to spy on their lecturers and other students who are not friendly to the regime (Abebe, 2014:2). Moreover, the regime has prevented any move to make the universities autonomous in administering their affairs (ibid). Such a systematic application of party ideology in Ethiopia has seriously undermined academic freedom and quality of education and injected an atmosphere of fear in the education system. However, for Zambia, it is not clear whether party ideology undermines academic freedom and the quality of higher education in the country. This study intends to establish that in due course.

Universities in Sudan have had a long experience of interaction with politics (Kilase, 2013: 1). Kilase asserts that universities have been severely impacted by the political climate and instigators of political reform. In hindsight, universities in Sudan are likely to be in constant transition controlled by political, economic and social changes unless state control is mitigated or replaced in favour of academic freedom.

Ayers' (1996:2) study uncovers perceptions of our behavioural and physical environments that have been subject to reform by forces outside of academia. The study reveals that academic freedom is currently subject to social, ideological pressures to the extent that many academics are disinclined to exercise their academic freedom. Society's ability to reform universities is subverting academic freedom's abilities to reform society.

Ayer's (1996: 5-6)'s study also illuminates the perceptions of stakeholders that both public and private universities often rely, to some extent, on contributions from corporate, individual and political institutions. This social ideology intrusion appears in various forms, and it attacks universities in both direct and indirect ways. Universities are often coerced to accept current social values, which are not always applicable. Thus, the intrusion force

of ideology born outside the university has limited the scope of academic freedom. The ability of institutions to donate also depends on the products of the university. Suppose an academic write an article that conflicts with or contradicts the behaviour or views of a potential donor, in that case, the potential donor is less likely to contribute funds and materials to the university. In their attempts to gather those resources, administrators have limited the work of their faculty not to jeopardize their financial well-being. The dependence of the university on funding from outside institutions is counterproductive to academic freedom.

According to Karki (2015: 30), colleges frequently perceive the state as a danger. The threat to academic appointments and promotions comes from the state. Similarly, De George (1997: 62) states that the threat from the state is that politicians or other government officials who monitor the state's funding for the university will demand a say in what is taught and how, as well as who is hired and who is not hired to the faculty. In a similar spirit, Al-Zyoud (2001:62) asserts that outside parties' participation in institutional internal matters and influence over academic staff appointment are considered as basic limits on academic freedom. For example, the President of Sudan has the right to appoint university vice chancellors on the recommendation of the Minister of Education and to intervene in the institution's day-to-day operations (ibid). This case from Sudan highlights how the state limits academic freedom in such contexts.

The scope of academic freedom allows for the advancement of knowledge that other members of society may deem unacceptable or offensive. To ensure academic freedom, experts believe that governments should refrain from interfering with institutions in matters of politics or ideology. Tamirat (2015: 121) begins with the premise that universities are highly politicised and influenced by a variety of political forces, and then offers a number of statements about universities that could benefit from empirical investigation by the Zambian academy. To begin, the study contends that universities and colleges frequently serve as hotbeds of political and intellectual debate. Governments are hesitant to grant institutions the kind of autonomy and freedom that could spark upheaval.

On the one hand, Kori's (2016:47) statement that colleges cannot avoid upsetting or annoying the government through their scholarly activities due to academic freedom

cannot be applied broadly. The case of Zambian faculty perceptions will provide additional perspectives on how this is seen in different jurisdictions. Academic freedom promotion is challenging in politically unpredictable times. Academic freedom violations in Burma, as recorded by Al-Zyoud (2001:60) and Khaniya (2007: 134), cannot be used to illustrate how academic freedom is seen in other nations. According to previous study, academic freedom in Burma (Currently called Myanmar) was jeopardised when the government closed the country's universities in 1989 and 1990. According to the later study, the country's periodic periods of political instability have impeded the expansion of higher education sector. Higher education in Burma has frequently succumbed to the influence of politicians and political power centres due to its political potential.

Shils' (1994: 81) research on the perspectives of managers and faculty members yielded comparable findings, suggesting that a variety of variables serve to limit faculty members' liberties. The investigation discovered a wide variety of academic freedom constraints, from incarceration and detention to torture and even termination. Furthermore, Shils says that many professors endanger themselves by their views, politics, and religion (1995: 5). As a result, the threats posed by the academy are viewed as limitations on free thought. He goes on to warn that the use of military action would highlight the government's threats to academic freedom. For example, in 1986, Jordanian armed personnel imprisoned 42 Yarmouk University professors and students for participating in union activities (ibid). The reality is that the student body, which also requires freedom, is a potential source of conflict. Indeed, student political engagement, sometimes with faculty support, is a potential immediate cause of university closures in poor countries (Caston, 2006: 331).

Various conclusions might be formed about the extent to which academic freedom is valued and practised in each of the aforementioned countries. In order to make academic freedom genuine and meaningful, universities and colleges should, in my opinion, examine their own programmes, institutional efficacy, and the quality of their teaching and research on a regular basis. According to the concept of accountability, the conditions under which academic freedom is practised and understood should be reviewed on a regular basis. Academic freedom debates will benefit from the periodic examination and become more dynamic as a result. It is critical to recognise the various dangers to

academic freedom. They can be delicate and lyrical at times, and brutal and direct at others. There are considerable barriers to intellectual freedom in institutions (Al-Zyoud, 2001: 59). Academic freedom is openly contested in authoritarian and totalitarian political systems, where faculty members are aware of censorship. Furthermore, the university's current status poses a significant threat to academic freedom (Karki, 2015: 29). Menand (1996: 5) contends that similar difficulties within the institution represent a threat to academic freedom's future.

Social ideologies also influence academic freedom in universities. According to Ayers (1996: 2), academic freedom allows for the exploration of ideas that some members of society may find unpleasant or offensive. Academic freedom and its boundaries change in tandem with shifting societal norms. As a result, the presence of current social ideology in the academia limits the spread of trustworthy information. Academic freedom, on the other hand, shields professors from repercussions for exploring contentious issues, allowing them to pursue research themes of personal interest.

The study concludes that academic freedom is influenced by changing political and social values and ideologies. Hence, this subjects academic freedom to constant redefinition. Ayers (1996: 10) asserts that academic freedom must be an entity independent from outside forces, stemming from social, economic and political influences. This assertion mentioned above is indeed a noble cause that should compel contemporary academics and legislative officials: Realising this goal will bring co-existence to relationships between administrators, academics, and students and maximise a university's potential in the society it was designed to serve. True academic freedom, free of extraneous influences and designed to support important processes, is a perfect match for the research questions at hand. More research on this type of independence in the classroom might be conducted.

In addition, the research by Romanowski and Nasser (2010: 15) examined faculty views on academic freedom at a large Gulf cooperation council national institution. Based on interviews, questionnaire results, and the authors' insights, the study gives the perspectives of faculty members on academic freedom. Researchers found faculty members' understandings of academic freedom to be nuanced and inconsistent, with

faculty members engaging in self-censorship. The nuances uncovered in this study have implications for the current study. Since the phenomenon is nuanced, the perspectives of Zambian academics and academic leaders may provide deeper insights into the nature of academic freedom in different locales. The perspectives from Zambian faculty members help to ensure that there are active ongoing dialogues about academic freedom.

2.5. Resource Endowments and Academic Freedom

The linkage between the resource endowments of the internal and external environment, shown in the reviewed studies, is a critical theoretical orientation of my study. How academics perceive the environment is not always homogeneous. Thus, perspectives from Zambian academics may expand the horizon of knowledge on the subject. Therefore, the perceptions of the effects of financial resources on academic freedom at UNZA, which my study sought to capture, may allow researchers to compare experiences from different locales and contexts. In addition, the perceptions of Zambian faculty, which are largely absent from current debates on academic freedom, provide an opportunity to enrich understandings about the subject matter. However, it is unclear whether realities confronted in the preceding jurisdictions are similar to how academics at UNZA perceive. Thus, this creates a knowledge gap worth bridging. Therefore, this gap has to be filled up in universities. As long as the perspectives of academics and academic leaders are absent from the literature, this body of scholarship will remain theoretically and empirically impoverished or incomplete.

Researchers have long analysed the implications of resources on academic freedom. Some research, such as that of Al-Zyoud (2001: 61) and Sharma (2015: 279), suggests that the financial basis of universities may jeopardise academic freedom. Academic freedom for lecturers and staff in higher education institutions is hampered by insufficient financial assistance. According to Al-Zyoud (2001: 59), academic freedom is threatened in part due to government interference. This is because the government provides a disproportionate percentage of university funding. Governments have a great deal of control over campus life because the majority of educational institutions worldwide are public and funded by the state. Additionally, because there are no legal or methodical

mechanisms that decide whether academic institutions are answerable to their societies. Therefore, the government spend finances however they see fit (Kori, 2016: 52). It is uncertain whether UNZA's academic freedom is hampered by its reliance on government support. As a result, the resource dependence theory used in the study is suited for researching alternative solutions to the problem of insufficient funding.

Degefa's (2015: 15) research, on the other hand, investigates the role of financial resources as an enabler of academic freedom. According to the findings, both students and faculty members associated academic freedom with having adequate funds for their individual fields of study. Funds can be used as a tool in the workplace. The data indicate that university finances have a direct impact on academic freedom. Due to a lack of financial assistance, academics are unable to fully exercise their academic freedom to fulfil their professional responsibilities, according to this study. Academic leaders and academics are increasingly working part-time outside of academia to supplement their salaries and benefits. This is possible even if it lowers academics' "actual" professional standing.

On the one hand, Suwanwela (2005: 10) notes that the reliance of public universities on government budget allocations makes them susceptible to pressure. He further reported that an academic in the Faculty of Economics in Thailand conducted research on corruption, including a survey of perceptions of politicians involved in corruption (Suwanwela, 2005: 10). The media reported on the findings, and politicians, including the head of a political party in the coalition government, were enraged. The state threatened to cut the university's budget, which the parliament soon considered. The matter was taken to the university council, and the researcher was defended at a meeting. Finally, it announced that it was the rightful duty of the university to research to serve the public.

Other researchers have focused on how academic freedom is challenged by academics whose social capital is low. A case in point is Grove's (2017: 164) study, which notes that the more seasoned academics who have achieved a higher degree of intellectual capital and prestige through their careers receive substantial research grants and have more options about what research they should pursue. On the one hand, those who do not have a high degree of intellectual capital do not have the financial resources to promote

their academic freedom practice. In addition, in a university, the winning of research grants generally operates based on rewards, intellectual capital and an academic's prestige. In light of this, Grove's (2017: 172) research findings indicate that partnering with young academics by creating consortia for large research projects is increasingly important to build the young academics' intellectual capital. This agrees with the focus of this study, especially in the area of social capital theory facilitating the enjoyment of academic freedom.

Universities are no longer the primary source of knowledge creation, as stated by Tamirat (2015: 127), as commercial and multinational research enterprises and organisations now have greater financial resources than universities. While it is not inherently wrong for private companies to do research, it becomes problematic when these same companies refuse to invest in innovation for financial reasons. This is because, from a monetary standpoint, colleges and universities will not be able to thrive unless they form alliances with businesses and other organisations in the public and private sectors. The effects of this partnership pose a danger to academic freedom. The goal of most businesses is to maximise profits, which stands in stark contrast to the purpose of universities, which is to further human knowledge.

The World Bank in particular, has had a detrimental effect on Ethiopian universities, with Tamirat (2015) 129 providing evidence of this. This might have serious repercussions for the World Bank's ideology, which saw college degrees as a source of personal gain and, by extension, information as a commodity. Therefore, effectiveness follows naturally from the reorganisation of the university system that began in the 1990s. To get there, Tamirat (2015:129) argues that science and technology should be prioritised over the social sciences and humanities. This theory is based on the fact that existing businesses are more important to growth since they are more likely to produce items that can be sold. Therefore, such an effort has the potential to make colleges into centers for training for certain occupations.

A common problem in today's universities is overloading faculty with administration and teaching responsibilities (Ansah, 2015: 177). Because of these issues, their academic performance declines. following the preceding, in order to maximise productivity,

academics now have increasingly complex professional responsibilities, such as administration, as argued by Mama (2006: 10). The time and energy spent on these extra responsibilities could have been spent learning, researching, and creating new information. According to Ramtohul (2012: 12), certain African colleges have shifted their focus to become "teaching universities" in light of the current situation. It is, however, unclear whether or not UNZA's faculty and administrative leaders are experiencing excessive workloads. With time, our study hopes to prove it to be true.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has aimed to examine the literature relating to academic freedom for academics in universities. I collected different but related studies to situate conceptions of academic freedom held by academics in Zambia within the more significant body of literature on the issue. The first section sought to draw attention to abstract forms of academic freedom in higher education. Although researchers have focused on the manifestation of the concept, there is a dearth of literature devoted to capturing the actual perceptions of academic and academic leaders in Zambia. As a result, much of the research has concentrated on the global North, leaving out vibrant arguments over how academic freedom may be adopted or localized in the Global South. I pointed out a paucity of research on faculty views of academic freedom, particularly studies on how faculty in Sub-Saharan African countries perceive the subject. The voices of these players are thus underrepresented in the research on academic freedom as it has been experienced in various geopolitical contexts. My research aims to provide answers to some critical concerns about how academic freedom is taken up, contested, and contextualized and how diverse stakeholders such as academics in Zambia shape and comprehend the academic freedom environment in which they operate.

For instance, the proposition by Kori (2016:47) that academic freedom is unavoidable for institutions of higher learning to irritate or annoy the government during their academic activities cannot be universally applied. Hence, the case of Zambian faculty perceptions will provide additional perspectives on how this is perceived in different jurisdictions, whether instruction comprises inquiry, questioning and challenging the situation and

arriving at better understanding and discovering new concepts and knowledge. Promoting academic freedom under politically unstable conditions is a real challenge.

Nor would the violation of academic freedom in Burma reported by Al-Zyoud (2001:60) and Khaniya (2007: 134) in Nepal reports, be used to explain academic freedom universally. For this reason, voices from different spaces are needed to enhance our understanding of academic freedom as perceived by different actors. Thus, the perspectives from Zambian academics and academic leaders constitute a viable addition to the body of knowledge. It is critical to explore academic freedom's experiences, perceptions, and appropriations in non-Western settings, particularly in developing countries. The Zambian instance, namely the viewpoints of UNZA professors, is a great case study to examine to understand better how crucial parties in the conversation see the nature and forms of academic freedom in practice.

Considering this review, it is necessary to investigate how Zambian faculty see academic freedom while also acknowledging that the faculty either welcomes or rejects the factors that define academic freedom, depending on the environment in which they emerge. We must investigate how local actors appropriated academic freedom per local realities, meanings, and circumstances (Dean, 2012) while emphasizing how such localizations represent universal ideals in global settings (Dean, 2012). The perspectives provided in the data chapters may be used to further the ongoing discussions concerning academic freedom, both inside and outside of higher education institutions. As a result of the research, there is now an opportunity to compare theoretical claims of academic independence to faculty members' real views and experiences.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed relevant literature on academic freedom to offer a theoretical foundation for the study. The purpose of this chapter is to situate the investigation within the most relevant theoretical frameworks to offer an academic context for the research. The chapter provides a plan on how to address the population gap identified in the previous chapter. Many theories could be relevant in investigating how lecturers view academic freedom, but I have chosen two to serve as the foundation for this study. Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) and social capital are two theories chosen for this. The theoretical framework of a research acts as the literal and figurative foundation upon which the knowledge of the topic is developed (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:12). It serves as the foundation for the study's design, topic, purpose, and research questions (ibid). It also serves as a launching pad for the methodology and analysis sections, as well as, most importantly, the literature review (ibid). This document serves as the "blueprint" for the study, detailing its organisation and approach.

Eisenhart (1991: 205) defines a theoretical framework as a blueprint that directs research by focussing on a formal theory created by utilising a well-established, consistent description of occurrences and relationships. As a result, the theoretical framework consists of the chosen theories that serve as the foundation for one's understanding and research method, as well as the principles and meanings of the theory as they apply to the topic at hand. This chapter is divided into two sections: social capital and resource dependence.

3.2 Social Capital Theory

In post-modern times, scholars in education have shown an increased interest in social capital and use education to study this theory. They agree that the contributions of social capital can be employed in the field of education. The more reason this theory is identified as one of the most suitable for this study. This section explains what social capital is. It also examines the positive and negative effects of social capital on academic freedom in higher education. The significance of social capital theory is also emphasised.

The maxim "It is not what you know, it is whom you know" sums up the notion of social capital. The idea is therefore not novel, but the phrase has only lately been coined (Labonte, 1999; Lazega & Pattison, 2001; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993; Putnam, 1995). However, with the writings of Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), and Putnam (1993), the phrase achieved widespread prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Claridge, 2004: 6). The main pioneers of social capital are Robert Putnam, James Coleman, and Pierre Bourdieu. These three academics offer conflicting, relationship-based definitions of social capital, which unavoidably led to contentious operationalizations and analyses of the theory.

Pierre Bourdieu was the first to formally define social capital. His principal interest was in how social structures encouraged disparity in resource acquisition and accumulation between the ruling and subordinate groups (Song, 2013:4). Bourdieu's research concentrated on the underlying reasons of class disparities. He saw people's social circles and positions as a resource that was detrimental to social justice and harmony. In his own words, he defined social capital as: The ability of a person to obtain credit in various forms is based on their "credibility," which is the sum of the resources associated with the existence of a long-lasting network of formalised connections of mutual acquaintance and recognition (i.e., membership in a group) (Bourdieu, 1985: 248).

According to Bourdieu, social capital is an advantage that comes with a well-established network of personal contacts. Thus, social capital is the accumulated labour of capitalists in relationships, networks, and contacts. Bourdieu's concept is appealing regarding the importance of 'status' and how the position in the social network could result in either restrictions or potential benefits through increased influence and access to resources.

Bourdieu states that capital is an asset inherent in the social world's structure and linked with power (1986: 242). Meaning that capital does not flow or trade freely. Even two agents with the same amount of capital might not be able to change capital into equally potent results. The amount of each agent's respective stock of capital limits each agent. Bourdieu asserts that capital is a force that is woven into the fabric of reality, making nothing equally possible or impracticable (1986: 242).

Bourdieu's social capital is associational because it encompasses a competitive market in which not all players may be 'winners'— it represents a zero-sum game. Fundamentally, Bourdieu's social capital is, therefore, one that provides a causal framework for both access to power and privilege and the failure to obtain access to power resulting in social exclusion. Bourdieu focuses on social capital as a means for the privileged to safeguard their place in the class system and reproduce the system itself by denying the entry of outsiders.

James Coleman provided significant contributions to the discussion on social capital. Coleman, a social scientist whose contributions to rational-choice theory had far-reaching implications in economics. He developed a definition of social capital that drew on both of these disciplines. That is why he defined social capital in terms of its usefulness. According to him, there are several types of social capital, but they all share two characteristics. Each symbolises a separate facet of society that is designed to support the actions of its players (individuals or organisations) (Coleman, 1988: 98).

His thoughts on social capital are relatively like the thoughts of Bourdieu. However, Coleman views social capital as an explanation for social action. Coleman (1998: 98) loosely defines social capital as a wide range of entities with two elements in common; they all comprise some part of the social system. They promote specific actions of actors—whether individuals or co-operated actors—within that system. The definition shows the intricacy of the concept presenting the concept's dependency on social structure and how a group of actors attain social identity by promoting norms and specific behaviour. For instance, a single actor who holds physical capital in the form of carpenters' tools can produce value by making a table. While an actor holding social capital and not interacting with other actors will not produce anything of value. He regarded social capital as promoting transactional activities through a preexisting social network.

Political scientist Robert Putnam proposed social capital while researching Italy's high percentage of civic participation (Boggs, 2001: 281). Coleman developed the concept of social capital, which Putnam elaborated on. The intricate webs of interpersonal ties were central to his argument. The term "social capital" is used to describe aspects of social

organisation, such as networks, norms, and social trust that promote coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit, similar to the ideas of physical capital and human capital, which are the tools and education that increase individual productivity (Putnam, 1995).

Putnam contends that social networks, reciprocity standards, and trustworthiness all have a substantial impact on the efficiency of any particular individual or organisation. Individuals with particular social capital characteristics are more able to collaborate toward common goals. According to Putnam (2001: 21), trust in networks is critical to the success of social capital. Relationships and reciprocity norms are two types of social capital that promote the building of trust. People are more likely to collaborate when they feel safe with one another. Collaboration develops connections and promotes honesty and dependability.

To summarise, the three thinkers described above all agreed that social capital is made up of instruments obtained through interpersonal networks. Bourdieu developed a network-based strategy for examining social stratification that is deeply entrenched in sociological tradition. It is a person's prospective network of personal and professional contacts, according to him. He saw it, like other types of capital, as an autonomous stratifier in the production and reproduction hierarchies of the social system. His idea of social capital is more complex and rigorous than its predecessors. He suggested that networks are crucial for social capital and persist in a variety of circumstances.

Coleman and Putnam's normative technique was inextricably linked to the functionalist research tradition in sociology, and they were staunch supporters of it. They used trust and reciprocity as examples of social capital. Their social capital concepts and uses were extensive. They grouped social capital with its causes and effects without investigating the links between the two. Coleman and Putnam differ significantly in their perspectives on the causal consequences of social networks. Coleman used his networks as a form of social capital, and Putnam recognised them as such.

This study was influenced by Bourdieu's social capital theory, which was thought to be more applicable to the task at hand: determining how academics and academic leaders built and mobilised their networks within and outside of the university in order to gain access to resources that allowed them to exercise academic freedom. Some academic

leaders have unrestricted access to the means required to defend their right to an unconstrained academic career because of long-standing connections.

According to Dekker and Uslaner (2001: 3), the quality of interpersonal relationships has a substantial impact on social capital. This wide range of interpretations reflects the context-dependence of social capital. This highlights how difficult it is to put concepts into practise. It appears that each researcher's concept of social capital is subject- and context-specific.

(a) Bridging Social Capital

Intergroup links, often known as "social capital bridges" (Claridge, 2013: 1). Bridges connect disparate people and organisations in order for them to share resources, increase their reach, and fill any "structural gaps" in the community's current network of relationships (Burt, 1992). Unlike bonding capital, which is concerned with tight relationships, bridging capital is concerned with relationships between more widespread groupings.

Connecting with people who are unlike us or who belong to groups, professions, or affiliations with which we have little to no prior experience is an example of using our social capital as a bridge (Woolcock & Sweetser, 2002:26). Bridging networks in communities become vital when people from different social groups learn to trust and connect with one another. The foundation of trust in constructing a social bridge is a person's personal friendship. In contrast to one's own experiences, social norms play a larger role in creating trust. Bridging networks can be formed when parents feel comfortable entrusting their children to families of different faiths or cultures who also have children in the same school. Individuals from many backgrounds collaborate to solve problems in bridge networks.

(b) Linking Social Capital

Social capital is defined as the social links that bind individuals of a society to one another and to the institutions that serve them (Woolcock & Sweetser, 2002:26). The term "social capital" refers to the connections between people and organisations that enable various groups to ascend in the social hierarchy and get access to resources such as authority,

popularity, and status (Cote & Healy, 2001: 42). This idea is also known as network connectivity. It is about connecting with powerful, resourceful people who can impact change. Nonprofits, federal, state, and municipal governments, and individual contributors are common participants in these interconnected webs. When universities place their trust in both public and commercial entities, the resulting linking networks are long lasting. They believe that these institutions will listen to them and their issues, and that they will keep their commitments. For example, if academics have confidence in the leaders of public and commercial organisations, they may opt to work with them. There will be communication between universities, non-profit organisations, and for-profit corporations. When academics have access to the tools and resources supplied by linked institutions and networks, their academic freedom improves. The academic community now has access to a useful new resource because of these newly established links. Putman notes that people's daily lives are less complicated in cultures where social capital is abundant (1993: 67).

(c) Relevance of Social Capital Theory to the Current Study

Abera (2014: 21) defines social capital as the regular methods in which people help one another meet their basic needs, including mutual aid, mutual support, and mutual contact. People's ability to do great things together, according to Field (2008:1), is dependent on their ability to build relationships and associations. Nowadays, interactions between colleges and their surrounding communities are more widespread. Universities are viewed as critical in fostering both economic growth and development in this age of the knowledge economy. As a result, the value of social capital cannot be emphasised. It serves a dual purpose by illustrating how academics at UNZA can use social capital to practise academic freedom and how social links between universities and external contexts facilitate academic freedom enjoyment. Social capital is usually seen as a significant resource since it may be used in times of need (Abera, 2014: 21). For example, when academia and government collaborate, fantastic things can happen. Because it is a centre of learning, the university may be called to provide expert opinion to the government on national issues.

As previously stated, the social capital theory of academic freedom is critical for acquiring access to resources, consulting services, and research projects both inside and outside of the university. As a result, the purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which academic freedom at UNZA is based on network contacts inside the academic community and between the external environment in order to gain access to resources, consultancy services, and research projects. According to Bourdieu (1985: 248), social capital is "the aggregate of actual or potential resources connected to ownership of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition."

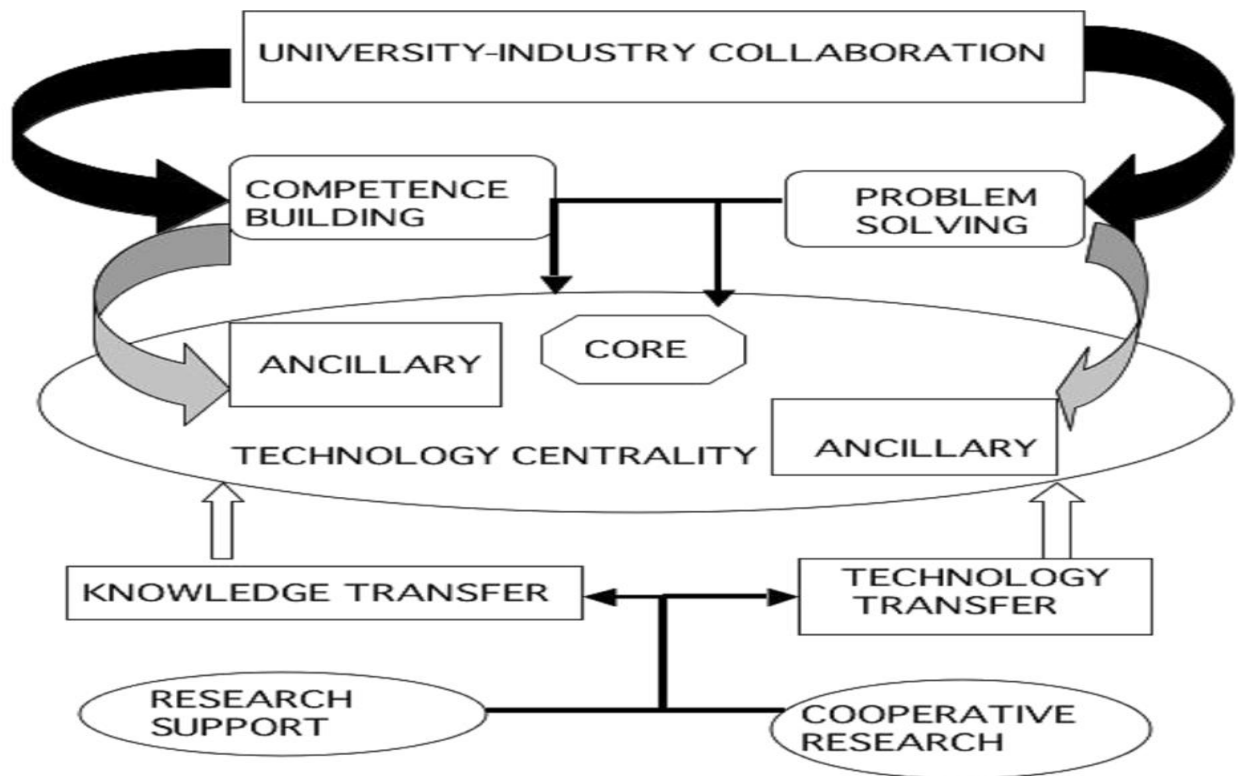
Huysman and Wulf (2004: 2) state that social capital, like conventional capital, is a sort of cumulative labour. This system's capitalists amass fortune through personal contacts with others. Some professors have been in the academic system for decades, establishing vast relationships, networks, and contacts both within the academia and with external entities such as the corporate world. They have greater academic freedom since they have easy access to materials through their networks. Furthermore, Hottenrott and Lawson (2012: 1) claim that academic research has benefitted industrial innovations by increasing the amount of resources from which private-sector enterprises can draw when seeking solutions to problems and technological hurdles.

Academics, on the other hand, may actively seek advice from relevant sectors in order to guide future study directions. As a result, their relationship is mutually beneficial. Using examples such as cooperative research, contract research, and consultancy, this inquiry examines if such linkages between universities and the rest of the world have a major impact on academic freedom protection (Hottenrott & Lawson, 2012: 1).

Individuals can efficiently collaborate within established frameworks, according to the premise of social capital theory (Fukuyama, 1995:10). Relationships between universities, corporations, and governments are required for intellectual freedom in higher education to flourish (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000: 111). When three organisations join forces to form a network, each one becomes a hybrid of the others. As a result, universities participate in entrepreneurial activities such as knowledge marketing and firm formation, while industry adopts an academic dimension to exchange ideas and improve

training. The term "tri-lateral network" refers to a joint effort of academics, business, and government to encourage the creation of a knowledge-based economy.

Figure 1: Multi-dimensional Contributions of University-Industry Collaboration



[Adopted from Chakrabarti and Santoro (2004: 32)]

Figure 1 depicts how universities can help firms with challenges such as knowledge and technology transfer, research assistance, and collaborative research. As a researcher, I believe that academic freedom must be protected through collaboration between universities, the business and governmental sectors.

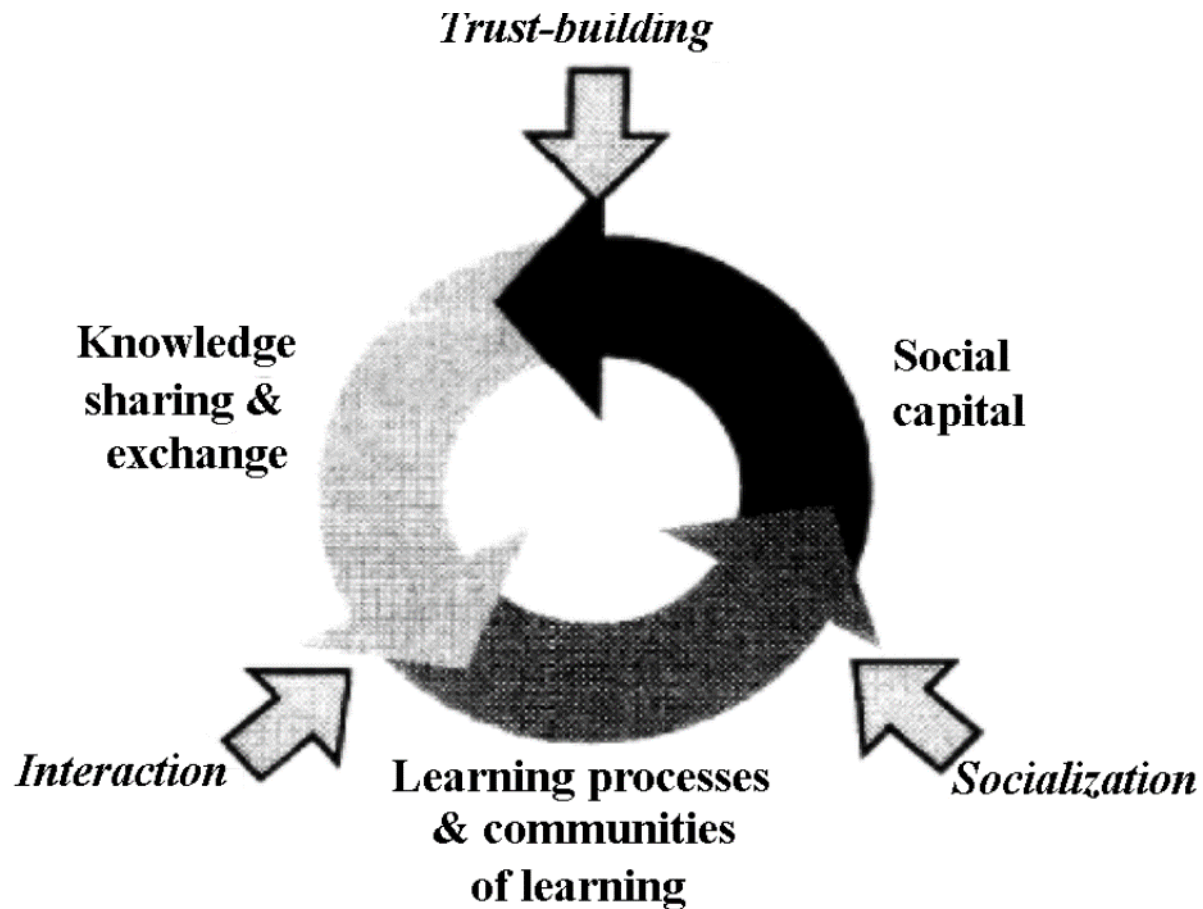
Academic freedom can also be fostered through social support, which is a type of social capital. Dominguez and Watkins define social support as a person's ability to reach out to others when adversity arises (2003:22). The assistance could be in the shape of physical objects or simply a wealth of information. People are always being polite to one another in the expectation of receiving a favour in return. Using social capital theory as a framework, we can assess whether UNZA faculty members have adequate support from

the institution, government, and private sector to engage in academic freedom, do research, and publish their findings. Academic freedom requires government and business to supply institutions with resources in order for them to grow (financial, material, and knowledge).

A second component of social capital is social networks. Social networks offer not just material but also emotional and intellectual support. People tend to align their behaviour with the beliefs of individuals with whom they have frequent contact (Gayen and Raeside, 2007:8). According to Portes (1998: 36), people's social networks are a valuable source of resources such as knowledge and companionship. Through their social networks, people can learn about chances for joint research, research contracts, and research consultancy. Academic freedom is linked to social capital via social networks, as innovations proliferate via information channels within a network structure.

Knowledge sharing, according to Durlauf and Fafchamps (2004: 42), is a component of social capital even if it is not its primary function. This suggests that social networks have positive spillover effects. It encourages academic freedom in this way by allowing for the rapid dissemination of discoveries from many disciplines of study. The distribution of social capital may also have an impact on the social norms of an academic community; for example, renowned members of the academic community may inspire their colleagues to conduct rigorous research and publish their findings if they wish to advance in their profession (Brown et al., 2006: 18). Freedom of expression in the classroom is a sign of a thriving academic community rich in social capital (Subramanian et al., 2002: 66). Socializing reduces the health hazards connected with stress (Uchino, 2004: 378). Academics, for example, are in a unique position to provide both psychological and social benefits. Academic freedom can be assisted by the various types of assistance supplied by social capital.

Figure 2: Knowledge Sharing, Learning and Social Capital



[Adopted from Chakrabarti and Santoro (2004: 23)]

The figure above depicts the interrelated nature of information sharing, learning, and the building of social capital among group members through the cultivation of trusting and collaborative connections. Faculty members must find a means to overcome the aforementioned gulf in order for universities to actively support academic freedom. Social capital, defined as "networks of strong, cross-cutting personal ties built over time that provide the foundation for trust, cooperation, and collective action," aids in the bridge-building between universities and the outside world. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998: 242) suggest that one's social networks and social capital affect one's ability to exercise academic freedom in an environment where intellectual capital needs "contextually embedded sorts of knowledge." As a result, in order to generate and share knowledge

and insights for national growth, universities must collaborate with stakeholders outside of the university.

While most people feel social networks are useful, there is growing realisation that it can have major unintended consequences for particular users and entire communities. This is the "negative social capital," also known as the "dark side of social capital." As a result, social networks can provide both good and negative social capital. Structure, according to structuration theorists, can either liberate or cage its members, similar to Anthony Giddens's structuration theory in sociology, which claims that structure has contradictory impacts on persons due to its connected nature with either agency or power (Giddens, 1984:169). According to social capital theory, people's views about the availability of resources can either facilitate or constrain their decision-making (Field, 2008:3). People will sometimes prioritise their own wants over the needs of others who are competing for the same resources, and they will do so through their networks.

As previously stated, social capital theory implies that people's beliefs about the availability of resources they can preserve through their relationships can either encourage or discourage them from taking specific actions (Field, 2008:3). To that aim, social capital theory has been critical in establishing whether or not academics at UNZA have the necessary support systems in place to properly exercise their academic freedom.

3.3 Resource Dependence Theory

The second theoretical foundation for this research is RDT, which is used to investigate how universities deal with their dependency on their respective contexts in order to maintain their autonomy as learning institutions. A major assumption of resource dependence theory is that organisations are inexorably hooked up with the condition of their environment (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978:1). According to this viewpoint, a university's success in encouraging academic freedom is determined by how well it interacts with its surrounding community and how successfully it secures the required resources from beyond its borders. Furthermore, the theory states that the key to organisational existence is the ability to gather and manage resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978:2). We use

resource dependence theory in this analysis to assess how much academic freedom universities can exercise in proportion to the financing they get.

In the 1970s, Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik established the RDT (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978: 1). It is based on the premise that an organisation can only continue to exist if it can obtain the resources it needs from the outside world. Universities require academic freedom in order to pursue teaching and research, but they also owe loyalty to a variety of organisations within their environment since they rely on financing and continued support. As a result, resource dependence theory shapes the environment in which the state and the university operate.

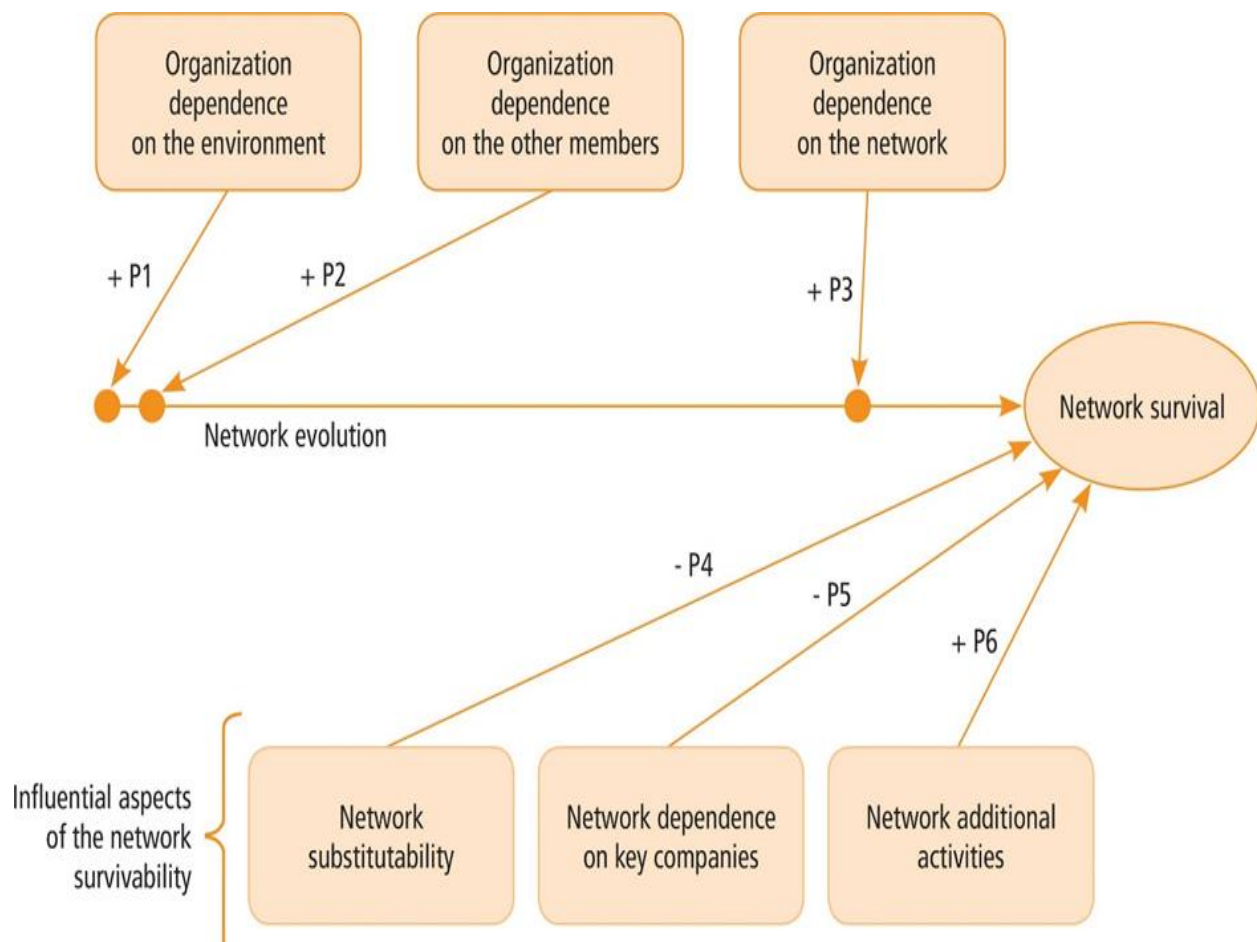
This concept is used to analyse organisations' relationships with the people and groups with whom they interact outside of the corporation. The following are the theory's guiding assumptions: organisations cannot live in a vacuum; environments are inherently unstable and unpredictable; and the extent to which an organisation must compete with others for scarce resources defines its borders and determines its degree of autonomy (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This belief holds that having access to and control over resources is critical to the success of any particular organisation. When a company has better access to and control over its resources, it gains a competitive advantage and more clout in the marketplace. As a result, the university's external connection is critical to attaining its major missions of teaching, research, and community service. The ability to direct how resources are used is critical to the success of any given organisation, according to the RDT. Its core premise is that organisations will employ a range of strategies to reduce their dependency on external resources and raise their level of independence, reducing the degree of unpredictability in the flow of resources from their surroundings.

RDT specifically maintains that dependence on crucial and important resources affects organisational behaviour, and that organisational decisions and actions may be explained based on the specific dependency situation (Nienhüser, 2008: 10). In this way, the university's ability to function is determined by the environment and the availability of resources. An even clearer instance of this principle is offered in the next paragraph.

According to the RDT, organisations are continually fighting for autonomy in the face of constraints and external pressures (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978: 257). Colleges and universities understand the need of avoiding dependence in order to promote an environment of academic freedom and autonomous action, and they work hard to obtain appropriate funding to that aim. In contrast, the theoretical framework describes how environmental reliance is managed at universities in the service of academic freedom.

Because most organisations do not control the resources they require to function, the theory posits that they must devise novel means of securing constant access to such resources (Etomaru et al., 2016: 136). Businesses aim to diversify their funding sources by building networks with numerous partners. Enterprises would not need to "relate" to the outside world or other businesses if they created all of the resources they required internally (Rossingnoli and Recciardi, 2015: 29). Individually, these companies speak with one another to ensure the flow of resources required to meet the needs of their stakeholders. As a result, because it lacks the in-house capabilities to carry out its principal operations independently, a corporation will require network collaboration. A corporation may join a network to gain access to these resources, but doing so will need managing its increasing dependency on its newfound partners. The interrelated character of the parties in a collaborative project is described by dependence. As such, a network member organisation should manage and evaluate its reliance on the environment as well as its collaborative connection. This scenario, moderated by enabling or mitigating factors, contributes to network durability. Figure 3 on the next page depicts our theoretical framework.

Figure 3: The Survival of Interorganisational Networks



[Adopted from Klein and Pereira (2016: 166)]

Because of their reliance on the outside world (as seen in Figure 3), most firms today have developed some form of network in an attempt to reduce this reliance. Working with other organisations in various inter-organizational links, according to Provan, is a common response to environmental dependence difficulties (1984:7).

The illustration also depicts how member organisations rely on one another during the network's early phases of development. The ability of an organisation to achieve its goals and get the necessary resources is determined by its distinctive qualities. While the decisions of partner organisations regarding how to resolve their dependencies are unknown, this interdependence becomes essential. That is why it is critical for the social

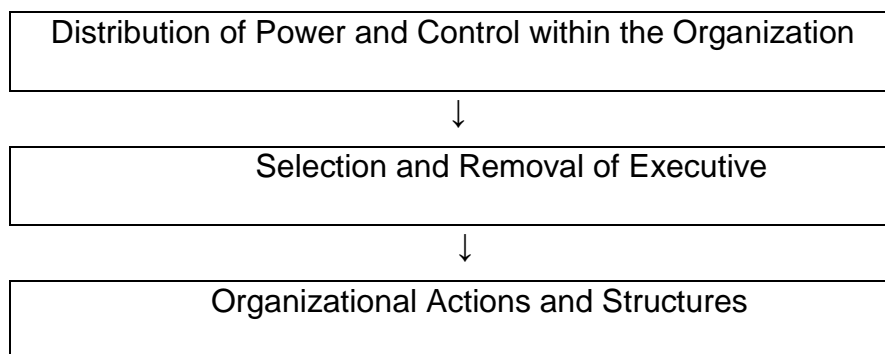
dynamics that keep the network working properly. However, non-optimal network behaviours, such as opportunism, can weaken and even bankrupt the relationship.

Relevance of Resource Dependence Theory to the Current Study

According to Etomaru et al. (2016: 136), the RDT principles have consequences for lecturer autonomy in the classroom and laboratory. Colleges, for example, require authority over resource allocation if they are to make decisions about teaching and research without being pressured or controlled by external stakeholders such as politicians, donors, and society. However, most public institutions rely heavily on government funding, donations, and international alliances to thrive. It is questionable whether UNZA has adequate funds to support academic freedom. A lack of financial resources imposes a significant restriction on academic freedom in terms of teaching and research. Hence, the RDT serves as the theoretical foundation for our inquiry. In this light, it is critical to comprehend the impact of UNZA's utilisation of external resources on academic freedom.

Figure 4 below shows how environmental conditions might affect how an organisation runs. The vertical relationship, once again, highlights the interwoven nature of these aspects in determining an organization's degree of independence.

Figure 4: Environmental Effects on Organisation



[Adopted from Pfeffer & Salancik (1978: 229)]

Figure 4 depicts the stacked vertical structure of interconnected pieces that contribute to colleges and universities' distinct character. As illustrated in the illustration, the environment is a source of uncertainty, constraint, and contingency in higher education (Karki, 2015:19). Increasing degrees of uncertainty and constraint need a redistribution of power and control within a university; power and control distribution inside a university is a major aspect in executives' decisions. Finally, the executives picked to lead them will be reflected in their behaviours. According to this viewpoint, the university's internal structure should be modified so that it has a stronger negotiating position when acquiring resources. Political action, broadening the scope of research at the university, diversifying academic offerings, and forming alliances with other schools are all examples of such strategies. Academic freedom at a university can be increased and its reliance on the state, minimised by tactics such as product development. The goal of this study is to see if UNZA has made an effort to diversify its funding stream in order to safeguard academic freedom.

Constraints are commonly seen negatively; however, the RDT emphasises that they are important for action in most situations and can improve decision making by emphasising how the environment can be a source of restraint (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978: 15). A restriction, on the other hand, limits the academic freedom of its believers. Academic freedom can be challenging to attain for a variety of reasons. For example, the university's resources could be restricted, inaccessible, or in the hands of unsavoury characters. In this context, the RDT poses a threat to academic freedom. As a result, academic freedom will never be fully realised until universities interact with their surrounding communities. The study's goal is to fill in the gaps about UNZA's compatibility with its surroundings.

3.4. Rationale for Locating Current Study in Social Capital and Resource Dependency Theoretical Frameworks

The review of relevant literature reveals some affordances and constraints for academic freedom. First, the academic pursuits of the lecturers and their leaders in different locales was predicated on the context in which they operated and the affordances it provided. In this regard, regulatory framework and the power dynamics presented unique affordances that could be tied neatly to social relations that allowed academics to undertake their core

functions, namely teaching, research and community service. Their dependence on diverse resources to discharge this mandate had also made them susceptible to the forces emanating from those with the power to avail such resources. The social networks they were able to craft for themselves as they pursued their various academic agendas could be adjudged to have had an ameliorating effect on the constraints arising from their dependence on the relevant resources. Thus, the reality that is privileged in this study is premised on the contextual factors arising from where the academics operate. The resource dependency and social capital could be seen as being mutually constitutive of experiences of the academics.

Thus, this study embraces the ways of knowing that are predicated on the situatedness of the study participants within a context that both constrains their academic pursuits as it provides affordances through the social networks that are made possible by the academics' positioning within a complex ideological landscape. The theory of social capital shapes the landscape by positioning the academics and their leaders at the confluence of networks and assemblages of influence that can mitigate the limits imposed by the resource dependency that is almost inescapable. Locating the study in this theoretical framework offers the value of highlighting the ways in which they can negotiate the limits and affordances of the context in which they operate. As a phenomenon, academic freedom can be investigated within these theoretical lenses as a way of generating unique insights that have seldom been the subject of research in this arena.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has therefore laid the plan for investigating academic freedom in the Zambian academy by situating the research context within two theoretical frameworks that describe both the constraint system and the affordances that are made possible within the constraining environment. The chapter has provided a detailed description of the social capital and resource dependence theories and tried to situate them within the context of an inquiry into academic freedom. The findings of this study will, hopefully, act as a springboard for further inquiry into academic freedom and how it is experienced in the context of the Zambian academy.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the design parameters and methodology used in this study. Chapter two noted a paucity of material reflecting lecturers' opinions on academic freedom. While conceptions of academic independence have influenced research, academic voices in Zambia have received little attention. Furthermore, few researchers have investigated how Zambian academics perceive academic freedom. As a result, this study investigates how UNZA academics view themselves and their professional identities in response to institutional environments that structure their experiences of academic freedom. Finally, this chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the research design, research approach, research paradigm, methods and procedures employed in this study.

4.2. Paradigmatic Orientation

This study's research paradigm comes from interpretivism. The interpretivist paradigm gave me greater freedom to address influence and impact issues and pose questions such as 'why' and 'how' (Deetz, 1996: np). Walsham (1993: n.p) contends that the objective of the interpretive paradigm is to yield an understanding of the context and the process whereby the phenomenon impacts and is impacted by the context. This contention justifies my choice of interpretivism as the philosophical rationale for this study. As the stress is on the socially constructed nature of reality, I hoped to view academic freedom through the lenses supplied by my study participants. I hoped the academics could describe or express their divergent individual experiences exercising academic freedom. Such a research environment enabled me to observe, investigate, and understand how the participants understand academic freedom and how it performs at UNZA. The interpretivist paradigm also enabled me to collect and document the subtleties of academics' perceptions through various written texts and individual face-to-face interviews in a social and cultural context where academic freedom occurs. As Thanh and Thanh (2015:24) convincingly assert, the interpretivist paradigm enables researchers to see the world through the participants' perceptions and experiences. This study sought

to elicit academics' perceptions in the execution of academic freedom at UNZA to uncover the reality of academic freedom at the institution. This paradigmatic orientation enabled me to understand and interpret academics and academic leaders' perceptions of academic freedom.

Within the paradigm, various points of view and truth claims can coexist. The basic goal of every study, according to interpretivists, is to lend meaning to the findings (Willis, 2007: 4). Exploring participants' comprehensions was a main goal of my research, and an interpretative technique provided me with the framework I required to analyse the responses of those who participated in my study. In the interpretivist paradigm, people construct their own subjective understandings of events and contexts, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2002: 13). I used an interpretivist paradigm in my research to explore how UNZA academics and academic leaders perceived academic freedom. Although the interpretivist paradigm opposes the idea of generalising research findings, this does not mean that it does not advocate for a full understanding of events that takes into account several points of view (Cohen et al., 2002: 21). Using this study methodology, I was able to learn about the perceptions of UNZA academics and academic leaders toward academic freedom.

According to Thanh & Thanh (2015:25), interpretive analysis is more qualitative than quantitative. Willis (2007: 110) argues that interpretivism fosters subjectivity and disregards the notion of a quantitative study on human behaviour. In line with Willis's point, Smith (1993: 120) holds that interpretivists are 'anti-foundationalists' because they believe there is no one proper or correct way to acquire knowledge and no distinctive technique that ensures intellectual advancement. Exponents of interpretivism disagree with the existence of universal standards for the study. Instead, they assert standards are products of a specific community or society (Smith, 1993: 5). Interpretivist researchers do not pursue the answers for their research rigidly. Instead, they approach reality from subjects, typically from individuals who own their experiences and are of a specific group or culture.

Willis contends that assuming the world around us is flexible leads to a wide diversity of opinions (2007: 194). As Willis (2007: 194) reveals, various people and societies "have

varied world perspectives." Many interpretivisms are often advocated to provide a fuller perspective of a situation (Klein & Meyers, 1998). Thus, I was able to obtain significantly more "in-depth" and "insightful" information from the general people than statistical analysis could provide. In accordance with these viewpoints, I gathered data for my study from academics and academic leaders from different departments with different work position rankings.

According to Merriam and Associates (2007: xv), qualitative research is about the "pursuit" of understanding a phenomenon from the participant's perspective as he or she makes sense of one's reality. Qualitative research aims to get insight from people's lived experiences and written accounts (Merriam and Associates, 2007:5). Researchers that use a qualitative approach seek to understand how people draw meaning from their own unique experiences and the world around them (Merriam, 1998:6). The higher education institution I chose to study in was a good fit because it provided a realistic representation of the social sector. The University of Zambia (UNZA) served as the empirical site since it resembled a social sector. In light of this, a qualitative study design was appropriate (Neutens and Rubinson, 2010:319). I looked for the candid feedback of academic and academic leaders in their own environments. I worked hard to draw specific inferences from the data rather than broad ones, so that I could better comprehend the contexts in which the research was conducted. As a result, participants in qualitative studies are often not selected at random, but rather with a clear goal in mind (Hendricks, 2009:2).

In addition, the tools and methods of qualitative research allow for the "voice" of marginalised groups like academics and academic leaders to be heard, making this type of research an excellent fit for qualitative methodology (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Using a qualitative methodology, researchers can find rich, contextualised accounts of real-world phenomena (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:12). According to Burns & Grove (2003:247), the emphasis places on the social context in which the research is conducted allows for a more complete and global knowledge of the issue at hand. As a result, qualitative research is a method that attempts to explain and study culture and human behaviour and their groups from the views of the people being investigated.

Contrary to positivism, interpretivism argues that reality itself is a product of interpretation (Frowe, 2001: 185). The theoretical foundation of interpretivist perspectives is the idea that reality is socially produced and malleable. Therefore, the world as we know it is a product of the associations we make between words and the elements of a separate universe. The underlying idea is that people's perceptions of their actions can be better understood if they are observed in their natural social environments (Hussey & Hussey, 1997: 48). The interpretivism paradigm promotes qualitative data's worth in the quest for truth (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994: 32). This research paradigm is situation-specific; therefore, it aids in the basic quest for contextual depth (Myers, 1997: 241). Therefore, our knowledge is always changing as a result of the contexts of other cultures, social groups, and interpersonal connections. According to this theory, there is no material basis for validity or truth. Claims to knowledge are not all equally accurate or genuine, and what is accepted as authentic or valid is a matter of negotiation.

4.3. Research Approach

The qualitative research approach was used in this study. This approach was utilised to find answers to the questions that prompted this inquiry. The use of a qualitative research approach affects study paradigm, design, and methods choices. According to Alston and Bowless (2003:290), qualitative research is intended to study and explain phenomena and processes that are unknown. As a result, the goal of qualitative research is to investigate the meaning that study respondents have about the problem rather than the meaning that researchers bring to the literature or the topic (Creswell, 2012:47). The qualitative researcher values hearing about phenomena from the perspectives of people who have had firsthand contact with them. According to Streubert and Carpenter (2011:3), qualitative research methods are the best for getting insight into circumstances involving human subjectivity and interpretation, particularly when attempting to describe and comprehend complex human occurrences.

The study also favoured a qualitative approach due to the nature of the questions answered. Qualitative researchers are particularly interested in "how people perceive events, construct their environment, and what meaning they attach to experiences" (Merriam, 2009: 5). I was able to investigate key non-numerical data from academics' and

academic leaders' personal accounts of the state of academic freedom at UNZA using a qualitative approach. It is more difficult to quantify academics' and academic leaders' experiences than it is to explain them in words. Hence, they shared their opinions and experiences about academic freedom. According to Creswell (2012:48), qualitative research is recommended when an inadequately conceptualised phenomenon necessitates investigation to have a better understanding of the situation. As a result, the qualitative research approach encourages in-depth elucidation of a phenomenon because it allows the researcher to speak freely with those involved, visiting their homes or workplaces and allowing them to freely share their stories without being influenced by the researcher's expectations or the existing body of literature (Creswell, 2012:48). This form of in-depth investigation is good for investigating a community and locating intangibles such as "hearing silent voices." The research approach offers the advantage of allowing vulnerable people to discuss their experiences in their own settings.

According to Creswell (2012:48), if a researcher opts for qualitative research because there aren't enough complete or acceptable theories for their society or sample, or if the existing theories don't adequately capture the complexity of the phenomenon, it is their duty to create new theories. Because statistical analysis and quantitative approaches are insufficient for this research problem, qualitative research is the best approach for this study. This study intends to investigate the nuances of academic freedom at UNZA by analyzing the perspectives and experiences of the academics.

Qualitative research is the preferred way for learning about phenomena that are poorly understood and describing those phenomena. Qualitative research, in the opinion of Streubert and Carpenter (2011:21), is best suited to responding to questions like "What is the nature of this phenomenon?" Since we can only understand the phenomenon by accurately describing the real human experience, Thompson (2007:304) argues that description is essential in qualitative research. Additionally, Polit and Beck (2010:22) concur that qualitative research identifies, reveals, and groups the fundamental elements of a phenomenon while also characterizing and explaining its dimensions, variations, and significance.

According to Creswell (2012:47), qualitative researchers develop an in-depth image of the phenomenon by reporting different points of view, identifying relevant variables, and creating the overarching picture that emerges from revealing intricate interrelationships among components. By using this descriptive feature of the qualitative research approach, I was able to categorize the key components of academics and academic leaders' actual lived experiences of academic freedom at UNZA. Later, I described these categories in more depth to facilitate a more thorough comprehension (Manamela, 2009:92).

According to Polit and Beck, in order to fully appreciate the phenomenon of interest, including how it manifests itself and any other variables that may impact the phenomenon, the researcher must first investigate it in its entirety and depth (2010:22). According to Manamela (2009:91), qualitative research allows for the identification of new locations to better understand the phenomenon. According to Polit and Beck, qualitative techniques can also help to elucidate the true nature of an unknown phenomenon (2010:22). As a result, the exploratory nature of qualitative research allows researchers to throw light on the description of an event, including underlying variables such as the participants' cultural roots. I was particularly interested in "academics' Perceptions on academic freedom at UNZA."

I was able to examine the academics' perceptions within these distinct scenarios using the qualitative research approach so that the reader might appreciate the important components and ramifications of their lived experiences. The contextual features of the qualitative study approach were chosen to represent these experiences in the real milieu where the stringent social-cultural sanctioning took place. The study questions were carefully chosen such that the areas addressed also helped contextualize the research findings to academic reality. According to Polit and Beck, the conditions of persons who encounter the phenomena are the greatest way to understand people's experiences (2010:15). This study was conducted in a severely sanctioned and stigmatized sociocultural milieu.

I went to the site where the phenomenon naturally occurs. This helped me improve the comprehension of the case and context studied but limited the generalizability. A qualitative research approach is suitable for gathering a particular type of data (Ary et al. 2006:474). I attempted to describe and comprehend the phenomenon from the perspective of the participant (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). To discover common themes, the qualitative research strategy applies an inductive technique to evaluate and analyze data (McNiff, 2016). The qualitative inquirer strives to get a thorough understanding and interpretation of the problem or phenomena presented by the participants. According to Patton (2002: 14), the qualitative approach typically produces detailed information on a significantly smaller number of individuals and cases.

The qualitative approach of data collection allows the researcher to acquire a thorough description of the phenomena of interest because it is based on words rather than statistics (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 11). Academic freedom is a hotly debated topic at today's university, and qualitative research looks extensively into the study's academics and academic leaders' perceptions. According to Patton (1990: 13), qualitative approaches are preferable because they allow for more in-depth, topic-specific research. The qualitative research approach focuses on themes, patterns, and general features, and provides a more descriptive perspective (Johnson & Christensen, 2012: 42). As a result, the purpose of this qualitative study was to determine how participants perceived academic freedom. The qualitative researcher also attempts to learn more about the phenomena and proposes novel interpretations for it (Johnson and Christensen, 2012: 42). Words, pictures, and classifications are used more commonly than numbers, statistics, and quantitative analysis.

4.3.1. The rationale for Choosing Qualitative Research

The study was conducted in a natural setting of a social sector. In this case, a higher education institution was a natural setting for a social sector, therefore qualitative research was the best option (Neutens and Rubinson, 2010:319). The perceptions of academics and academic leaders were sought in a natural setting. I endeavoured to make meaning from the data collected to understand the settings and not generalise conclusions solely. Hence, in qualitative research, those investigated are typically chosen

purposively rather than randomly (Hendricks, 2009:2). The qualitative research approach, according to Merriam and Associates (2007: xv), is a "pursuit" of understanding a reality from the individual's point of view as he or she creates the meaning of his or her reality. The insight and comprehension that qualitative research aims to obtain comes from human experiences and words (Merriam and Associates, 2007:5). Qualitative researchers are interested in the meaning that individuals construct to make sense of their experiences and the world around them (Merriam, 1998:6).

Furthermore, qualitative research is well suited to this study of disadvantaged groups, such as academics and academic leaders, since the tools and procedures of qualitative research give such groups a distinct "voice" to be heard (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). A qualitative approach enables the investigator to find specific descriptions that are nested in a real-life setting (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:12). According to Burns and Grove (2003:247), its emphasis provides a full and holistic knowledge of the social context in which the study is conducted. Thus, qualitative research is an approach that attempts to describe and understand culture, human behavior, and their groups from the views of the persons being examined.

The qualitative research approach was selected due to the nature of the study focus. "Understanding how individuals interpret their experiences, construct their reality, and give meaning to their experiences" captures the attention of qualitative researchers (Merriam, 2009: 5). The utilization of a qualitative approach allowed for the study of significant non-quantitative data from the perceptions of academics and academic leaders regarding academic freedom at UNZA. The experiences of academics and academic leaders are best expressed through words rather than figures. Therefore, they expressed their perceptions on academic freedom, and I generated meaning within the context of the natural environment in which they operate.

A qualitative research approach was appropriate for generating descriptive data (Ary et al. 2006:474). Descriptive data is pliable, moldable, and unpredictable (Maxwell, 2005:2; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007:54-55). I was able to describe and comprehend the phenomena from the perspective of the participants (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The qualitative research approach utilizes an inductive strategy to understand and analyze data in order to identify

common patterns (McNiff, 2016). The qualitative investigator seeks a thorough understanding and interpretation of the problem or phenomena presented by the participants. According to Patton (2002: 14), the qualitative technique typically produces detailed information on a considerably smaller number of people and cases.

The qualitative approach to data gathering uses words rather than numbers, allowing the researcher to acquire a detailed description of the investigated phenomenon (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 11). Qualitative research investigates the specific perceptions of academics and academic leaders participating in research on academic freedom in universities. Patton (1990: 13) claims that a qualitative approach allows the researcher to conduct in-depth and extensive research on certain research problems. The qualitative research approach allows themes, patterns, and holistic features to take precedence in descriptive data (Johnson & Christensen, 2012: 42). Furthermore, the qualitative researcher attempts to learn more about the phenomena and develop new ideas and theories (Johnson and Christensen, 2012: 42). Words, visuals, and classifications are used far more than figures, numbers, or statistical analysis. As a result, qualitative research was conducted to find out the participants' understanding of academic freedom.

Additionally, it takes into account the social context in which behavior occurs. Interviews and observations are typical data collection methods (Hatch, 2002; Neuman, 2007; Stake, 2010; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2011). The data collected through such procedures provides insight into the logic and sentiments that motivate people to act in various ways. A qualitative technique yields rich and comprehensive information on a small study sample. Because the major goal of this study was to examine and characterize academics' and academic leaders' perceptions of academic freedom, a qualitative research approach was used. This technique assisted me in comprehending the issue under investigation via the perceptions of academics and academic leaders.

4.4. Research Design

In this study, I employed phenomenology to gain insight into the participants' daily experiences in order to generate plausible findings. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010:141), a phenomenological investigation aims to comprehend people's experiences, attitudes, and viewpoints of a certain context. The researcher can generalize anything

from an insider's perspective by looking at other perspectives on the same situation. The phenomenological method seeks to comprehend and analyze the meaning people place on their daily lives. A phenomenological study, according to Creswell (2007:57), is one that examines the interpretations that different people have of a phenomenon, problem, or theory.

Although the concept "phenomenology" is commonly employed in qualitative research, Jones and Barbasi (2004:99) note that it is frequently associated and accompanied by uncertainty regarding its definition. As a result, clarifying the notion may alleviate this ambiguity. Phenomenology, according to Van Manen (1997:4), is the study of people's lived and shared anecdotes. Thus, it is the study of the nature of events or experiences, as well as how they happen (Smith, 2003:29; Van Manen, 1997:10). In accordance with research, the investigator's experiences may differ from those of the participants in a study.

Moran (2000: 24) and Oiler (1999:78) go on to say that phenomenology is a strategy of observing and articulating a phenomenon or experience exactly as it unfolds in the conscious mind. According to Stephenson and Corbin (2000:117), phenomenology strives to qualitatively grasp and communicate the substance and meaning of experience. Furthermore, Wilson (2002:1) broadens this term by claiming that phenomenology seeks to investigate how human experiences are perceived in cognitive and non-cognitive tendencies, as well as how they might be aesthetically valued. According to Valle, King, and Holling (2006:67), the construction of conscious experience as perceived in the first person is the foundation of phenomenology. The goal is to examine things as they are experienced by the participant, not reality as a distinct entity from the participant. Thought, memory, perception, emotions, desire, volition, physical awareness, personified actions and social interactions, and expressive activities such as communication, comprehension, and meanings are examples of such phenomena.

Phenomenology seeks to understand how people build the meaning of their experience. The basic basis for generating this meaning, according to Wilson (2002:1), is intersubjectivity, which is based on the notion that a person's experience of the world is with and through others yet represented by the individual himself or herself. As a result,

whatever meaning one builds is embedded in human activities, as is the entirety of social artifacts and cultural objects embedded in human behavior (Boeree, 2002:26). Thus, the intersubjective link is created since making sense of the world and producing meaning are socially produced and must be understood within the social context and relevant systems (Streubert & Carpenter, 1999:44). Accordingly, Phenomenology differs from other types of designs in that it emphasizes subjective experience (Paley, 2005:107).

Furthermore, phenomenology aims to comprehend the underlying interpretations of peoples' lived experiences. As a result, rather than providing a straightforward explanation, phenomenologists attempt to understand the interpretation (Van der Zalm & Bergum, 1999:212). Hence, the phenomenon under consideration in this study is academic freedom in universities, which requires academics and academic leaders to voice their perceptions.

The concept of intersubjectivity has a methodological implication. It serves as the foundation for understanding oneself and others, setting the path for further research on academics' and academic leaders' lived experiences with academic freedom at UNZA. In this hermeneutic study, the lived reality (experience) of academics and academic leaders serves as the center of inquiry, with subjective and objective realities combining in a union between respondents' reality and my knowledge.

4.5. Tools for Data Generation

Following the theoretical framework of this investigation, the data generation techniques used in this study were those consistent with the qualitative approach employed. An interview schedule was the major data collection instrument used in this investigation. I also analyzed several critical official documents (UNZA and national documents) to confirm some of the information garnered from the interviews. As a result, I had a comprehensive awareness of the milieu in which academics exercised academic freedom. The study's methodology should include explanations of the types of data needed to answer the research questions, as well as procedures for collecting this data. Qualitative research undertakings produce thorough textual accounts of individuals' attitudes, thoughts, experiences, and perceptions of a problem being investigated in their

natural world (Cohen et al. 2007; Mack et al., 2005). Rather than collecting data that may be applied to other geographical areas or people, their main focus is to generate a complete and nuanced knowledge of a given sociocultural settings or occurrence (Mack et al., 2005: 2). The data required for such descriptions are typically peoples' expressions and behaviors acquired from first-hand contact with the research respondents. The fundamental purpose of this research was to gain a better understanding of academics' lived experiences with academic freedom, which were mostly based on their perceptions. According to Merriam, qualitative data may be generated through "interviews, observations, or document analysis" (2009: 9). This study employed interviews and document analysis.

4.5.1 Interviews

A semi-structured interview was used as the effective data-gathering strategy in this research (Patton, 2015). Interviews with academics and academic leaders at UNZA allowed me to obtain more profound knowledge of their sentiments, thinking processes, viewpoints, and experiences in general. Thus, I understood better how they saw and assessed the institution's commitment to academic freedom. Furthermore, I understood how these academics had or did not have academic freedom via the interviews. As a result of the semi-structured interviews, I had access to "the cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world" (Meisenbach, 2004: 73). When it comes to interviews, Seidman (2006: 10) sees them as an inter-subjective dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee, at the heart of which lies "an interest in understanding the lived experiences of other people and the meaning they make of that experience... an interest in other individuals' stories because they are of worth". To get academics and academic leaders' subjective viewpoints on academic freedom, I conducted all 30 interviews myself, using a flexible interview protocol. The interviews were "flexible" because they were conversational, with more open-ended than closed-ended questions. Personal narratives were examined for each participant by actively seeking out the perspectives of my respondents and their views on my comprehension of the replies, both during the interviews and after I had written up the interview transcripts.

For a variety of reasons, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the major data collection strategy. To begin, they gave respondents the opportunity to express their own perceptions, ideas, attitudes, and experiences about academic freedom (Patton, 2002: 343). A semi-structured interview necessitated both flexibility and structure, which enabled me to understand about academic freedom at UNZA (Patton, 1990: 284). The method of generating data provided me with adaptable, imaginative, and rigorous was for investigating each interviewee's lived experience in a situation-specific method (Polit & Beck, 2006:220). The technique also allowed me to get access to the respondents' personal (or inner) emic perspective as well as their intimate and private reality, which was essential for understanding their lived experiences and respective interpretations of academic freedom at UNZA (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011:22).

Semi-structured interviews were used as they employ an interview schedule that allows for a coherent flow of themes and allow the interviewer to seek clarity where possible. This allows the interviewer to gather as many perceptions as possible from the participants' lived experiences, resulting in comprehensive data needed for the research (Scott & Garner, 2013:283). I gave each person enough time to share their experiences without overly prompting or disrupting them. Having said that, if the need arose, probing and clarifying questions based on clues and hints noticed throughout the interview were used to analyze the circumstances of the lived experience in greater depth. This method permitted respondents to discuss their experiences in detail until they felt they had exhausted their ideas. Furthermore, the interview was simplified by asking each respondent theme questions in an exploratory fashion that did not limit respondents' replies only to pre-established answers (Norwood, 2000:247-248).

On the one hand, the technique permitted respondents to express their experiences with academic freedom in their own words rather than following preconceived lines of reasoning, as would have been the case with structured interviews in quantitative research (Norwood, 2000:247). On the one hand, the technique allowed respondents to express their experiences with academic independence in their own words rather than through preconceived lines of reasoning, as organized interviews would have done in quantitative research (Norwood, 2000:247). By asking probing and clarifying questions,

the technique offered a window to automatically monitor interviewees' leads. These questions led to the investigation of various signals and themes into more comprehensive lived experiences of academic freedom at UNZA, therefore avoiding inaccurate data of their lived experience narratives (Qu & Dumay, 2011:239).

Semi-structured interviews were appropriate for this study since they aligned with the phenomenological research approach. According to Englander (2012:15), semi-structured interviews are among the most preferred type of interviews used to gather data in phenomenological qualitative research since such research deal with the subjectivity of participants' information. They provide a platform for subjective descriptions to be generated. Capturing accounts of a lived experience from multiple people is a subjective endeavor since experiences differ from person to person and situation to situation, necessitating an open approach. Quinlan (2011:310) contends that the type of data collected from phenomenological research design is built on subjectively and individually lived experiences since they target personal experiences through a rigorous one on one interview. This is congruent with semi-structured interviews, which emphasize the significance of human experience in acquiring information (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011:409) and support interaction with people as a foundation for qualitative research (Englander, 2012:14).

Following the interpretivist paradigmatic orientation, semi-structured interviews were ideal for this study. Scotland (2012:12) notes that interpretive data collection approaches such as semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions are essential because they give insight into people's behaviour, interpret behaviour from the interviewees' point of view, and allow interviewees to express themselves freely instead of dominating them. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions allow flexibility and freedom of expression by individual interviewees on their specific experience of a phenomenon. Rao (2012:64) argues that semi-structured interviews are designed to collect data on personal perceptions, viewpoints and beliefs and to show the connections and links in the data that could be overlooked under more routine inquiries such as surveys. Semi-structured interviews also consider the maximum length of time for interviewees to express their views concerning their world of experiences.

When undertaking the interviews, I observed several principles to provide quality. In the first place, I remained open to the concepts that arose from the interviews and remained focused on conceptualising them from each interviewee's "perception", without unwarranted influence from my preconceptions and enforcing any of my personal views on them by practising reflexivity (Jonker & Pennink, 2010:77). Secondly, I maintained the progression of the interviewees' stories by avoiding undue interruptions and only deflected interviewees' storylines when they completed their sentences. The thematic questions were worded in simple language. As the interviews progressed, vague areas were explained to ensure the interviews did not delay and remained candid and flowing (Qu & Dumay, 2011:248). Finally, the interviews were sustained by maintaining a good rapport with the interviewees by not giving opinions about responses and avoiding non-verbal cues of surprise or shock. Utilising non-verbal communication, such as nodding to show approval or correct response, was minimal. I also avoided asking leading questions, ensuring that all signals and new areas introduced during the interviews were followed through (Qu & Dumay, 2011:248).

Elmir *et al.* (2011:14) propose that the researcher employing semi-structured interviews must consider the setting of the interviews. A key concern is that both the interviewer and interviewee must feel secure in the interview venue. To minimise interviewees' sense of vulnerability, each interviewee selected an appropriate location where they would feel comfortable, as noted by McCosker, Barnard & Gerber (2001) and cited in Elmir *et al.* (2011:14). In this study, it turned out that most preferred their offices because, as qualitative research demands, interviewees should be interviewed in familiar places where they feel safe and comfortable. Further, the interview setting should be the natural setting where the phenomenon happens to yield rich data.

As Becker (1992:39) suggested, the interview venues in this study were exclusive, free from disturbances, and the interviewees felt comfortable and relaxed. The rationale for a comfortable place is that personal experiences, in particular, lived experiences, are well told when a participant feels safe and secure as provided by a homely atmosphere. This idea is further validated by Streubert and Carpenter (2011:36) that the safer and more

comfortable a person is, the more likely they will disclose cardinal information about themselves, like lived experiences.

A high quality portable digital MP3 player was utilised to record the proceedings to ensure sound quality recording and data security, as proposed by Fernandez & Griffiths (2007:10). This device is founded on a patented audio-specific format devised by the Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG). It integrates excellent audio quality and small size allowing audio files to be shared effortlessly, including e-mail (Fernandez & Griffiths (2007:11). Burns & Grove (2005:540) supported the utilisation of sound quality recorders during qualitative interviews. They further note that poor recording may be so unclear or so distorted that transcription becomes unbearable. Thus, I used high-quality digital recorders, which enabled me to pay attention to the interview process. This included appropriately asking questions and clarifying any grey areas without worrying about the recording, which would have been the case if tape recorders had been utilised. I was, therefore, relieved of "tape anxiety". Hence, this enabled me to focus on the interview instead of worrying about batteries and tapes finishing. I also had a third backup recorder, an iPhone 8 plus a smartphone voice recording application.

In addition to digital recording, I took field notes to capture the context of the descriptions. Note-taking was utilised to describe interviewees' expressions, such as changes in their position and other observations like emotions that digital recordings could not capture. Streubert & Carpenter (2011:43) note that including field notes during data analysis helps realise a more contextualised description of lived experience. These field notes became indispensable additions during data analysis because they were employed to validate the interviewees' critical points and proved necessary to emphasize emerging thematic areas. Flood (2010:11) recommends that extra care be needed to enhance data safety, mainly when the interview is the primary data source in this study.

The views of Hannabuss (1996:22-25), Field (1996:136), and Qu & Dumay (2011:245) shaped the interview process of this study. They advise that each interview be tailored to the individual situation and context whilst guaranteeing interviewees' comfort. Therefore, interviewees were made to feel comfortable, and a great sense of rapport was developed

by involving them in a brief talk before each interview. This helped relieve the interviewees' anxiety and prepare them for the interview.

I described the purpose of the study, issues about confidentiality and anonymity, requested interviewees' cooperation and obtained their formal consent. To audio record the interview proceedings, permission was requested. Interviewees were asked if they had questions after guaranteeing them confidentiality, reaffirming that no information such as their names would be disclosed, instead acronyms A (for academics) and AL (for academic leaders). All the interviewees consented to have their interviews recorded. The information on ethical considerations is in section 4.7 and the consent form (refer to Appendices G and H).

I started every interview by asking the grand tour question: "What is your understanding of academic freedom?" Creswell (2012:54) explains that beginning a qualitative interview with an analysis of a single concept enables the interviewer to comprehend the phenomenon in adequate detail. Thematic and follow-up questions were tactfully introduced as the interviews advanced to explore further aspects of their lived experience, which had not been shared up to this point. The interview guide gave directions and focused on the interview. I assumed a position of self-reflexivity, becoming mindful that my preconceptions about participants' experiences could affect the interpretation of their experiences. This self-reflexivity prepared me for data generation (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011:34).

During the interviews, I made sure there were no unnecessary disruptions. Interviewees were asked to share their lived experiences by describing their feelings, memories, meanings and thoughts that have continued to linger in their thoughts as they reflected on academic freedom at UNZA. I approached the interviewees' responses with an open mind and thoroughly probed vague areas (Patton, 1990:324). The participants were asked to explain their experience with Academic freedom. As Becker (1992:38) postulates, elucidations were sought until participants said they were unwilling to discuss further an area or experiences were exhausted.

I further employed a flexible method of "not using a preconceived framework", but more preferably allowing to be guided by the research context's unique truths (Grbich, 2013:

278). I played an active or passive role during data collection. This flexibility was indispensable for entering participants' world and sufficiently eliciting their story to comprehend better the descriptions of lived experiences from the participant's point of view (Wall et al., 2004:32). Leading questions and giving personal opinions during the interviews were avoided, ensuring that all the descriptions were primarily participants' views.

I also remained focused on the data as participants' experiences were explored, listened carefully, and followed every participant's story eagerly. As suggested by Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen, Liamputtong (2007:330), I remained composed and attentive. Interviewees were not interrogated. Instead, they were treated with respect and were made to feel respected and valued by showing genuine interest in their stories during all the interviews.

Finally, I urged interviewees to speak by using culturally acceptable affirmation sounds that encourage an individual to speak while considering not to depict a sense of approval or disapproval of what was being said—probing and clarifying questions assisted in extracting more information in ambiguous situations. The interviews carried on up until data redundancy was achieved and interviewees exhausted their lived experiences. At this juncture, the interview drew close with a request for a follow-up interview if any vague areas arose (Van der Wal, 1992:115).

In this study, pre-testing of the data collection instruments was conducted on four participants who did not form part of the study's final sample. Pre-testing of the interview guide aims to foster a climate that facilitates the final data collection instrument (Bowden *et al.*, 2002: 322). Each in-depth interview lasted one hour to two hours and was audio recorded. In addition, the audio recording verbatim from each in-depth interview was transcribed. Notes were also taken during the interview.

The pre-testing exercise aimed to determine whether the questions posed were comprehensible. It was also to estimate the length of time to be taken for each interview and mark periods of participant fatigue. On the one hand, the exercise aimed to maximise the quality of my interviewing skills and note-taking, audio recording and transcribing. On the other hand, considering the foregoing, consultation with my supervisor concluded that

the order in which questions were asked was indispensable. Hence, relevant, and necessary adjustments were made to the interview guide.

4.5.2 Document Analysis

It is essential to differentiate between the literature review and document analysis as part of the data generation tool. Both do overlap in that the two deal with the sources of data in some or other written format; however, including document analysis as part of the data generation strategy is something different from the literature review that all researchers involve themselves in during a research study. Document analysis is like texts that can be examined for historical significance (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:361). Furthermore, document analysis is a tool employed to collect data in qualitative research. According to Merriam (2009: 139), a document is a general term referring to a wide variety of written, graphical, digital, and tangible information relating to the topic at hand. Ritchie and Lewis state that documentary analysis entails the examination of existing documents, either to understand their meaningful content or to uncover deeper meanings which their style and coverage may reveal (2003: 35).

The scientific community shouldn't presume that a paper was created or published with the intention of being read solely without examination. Documents may not have been designed with social search in mind, yet they may still be examined. They are conserved so that they become available for analysis and relevant to the concerns of the social researcher (Bryman, 2008:515). In this study, document analysis was employed to gain empirical knowledge and to back up the data gathered from interviews. In this regard, I used document analysis to supplement the interviews Yin claims that the document's primary goal is to validate and refute information from other sources (2014: 107).

In my perspective, conducting interviews alone would not generate enough data to adequately investigate the subject of academic freedom; so, I relied on document analysis to flesh out my data collection. According to Banister et al. (2011:204), because the world is socially created, any study technique has the potential to be biased and cannot be value-free. When several instruments are utilised, data validity improves because more detailed information can be collected from various sources (Biggerstaff, 2012:183).

An interpretivist strategy was favoured in the study. As a result, the data collection tool employed for the documentary analysis was adequate. Document analysis demands comprehensive interpretation and development of the topics and issues present in the documents' contents to reach the study aims (Williamson, Given and Scifleet, 2013:427). When several documents are used in interpretative research "to offer deeper insight into the phenomenon of interest or to validate forms of evidence," document analysis, also known as content analysis, was employed.

In this study, document analysis was employed to supplement semi-structured interviews. Koshy (2011:89) recommends using document analysis to enhance other sources of data. I was concerned that the semi-structured interviews being utilised to collect data would prevent us from asking all the necessary questions and learning everything we needed to know about academic freedom. Banister et al. (2011:204) believe that any study method might be biased because people are influenced by the social reality that is socially manufactured. Using a variety of approaches to collect data boosts confidence in the outcomes. When compared to data collected with a single instrument, data collected with many instruments is more complete (Biggerstaff, 2012:183).

In this study, various official documents were used based on the importance of the study, its aims, and its questions. National Policies: Educating our Future, the Zambian Constitution, and the Zambia Higher Education Act were among them. I also examined UNZA documents, such as the UNZA Strategic Plan, Research Policy and Intellectual Property Rights, Research Policy Implementation Manual, and UNZA Calendar. Together, these documents enabled me to establish the research's context and comprehend the study participants' perceptions through reality, which might not be what they claimed (Koshy, 2011:90).

Document analysis's success or failure is contingent upon the method it was managed. Creswell (2005:220) proposes specific procedures that should be observed in the document analysis approach. These comprise the identification of essential documents:

- making a distinction between private and public documents,

- seeking permission to employ the documents and,
- ascertaining the documentation's accuracy, completeness, and usefulness before seeking permission to use them.

There was no need to seek any permission, given that UNZA documents were readily available in the university. In addition, some of the documents were available on the internet, such as the *Zambian Constitution* and *Zambia Higher Education Act*.

4.6. Research Population

The study population included all UNZA academics and academic leaders. At the time of the study at UNZA, the total population of academics and academic leaders was 879. The term 'accessible population' refers to the proportion of the universal population to which the researcher has complete access. The universal population may be unmanageable due to size, location, numbers, and other considerations. In this instance, the accessible population becomes feasible (Brink, 2006:1230). Therefore, the study's accessible population comprised academics and academic leaders with lived experiences of academic freedom at UNZA. The study focused on academics' perceptions on academic freedom.

The number of participants chosen for a research study, as well as how they are chosen, are heavily influenced by the study's purpose, participant characteristics, and, to a lesser extent, the research design (Cohen et al. 2007: 101-102; Hatch 2002: 49; Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005: 6). Because qualitative research seeks to give detailed explanations of social phenomena based on information acquired from participants during face-to-face interviews, it demands time-consuming and rigorous data collection methods (Stake, 2010). As a result, a small population size is suitable for this type of study (Cohen et al. 2007: 102).

4.6.1 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A 'sample' is a portion or subset of a population chosen for a specific study (Ng'andu, 2013: 36). It is, among other things, a set of elements thought to be representative of the accessible or universal population. Additionally, it is a subset of the population in which

the investigator is interested. Therefore, this study took a portion from academics and academic leaders' population at UNZA.

On the one hand, sampling technique refers to the procedure or method of selecting a subset of the population to represent the total population in order to determine or forecast the predominance of an unknown piece of data about the larger population, case, or condition (Gupta & Gupta, 2013:41). Sampling is essential for research studies because the targeted population consists of too many individuals to be included as participants for any research project. The goal of sampling in qualitative research is to select information-rich cases and investigate them in depth (Norwood, 2000:210). Thus, sampling in qualitative research entails selecting knowledgeable, insightful, and informative persons who are ready to speak in detail with the researcher in order to meet informational demands (Polit and Beck, 2010:319). There are two distinct types of sampling techniques: probability sampling and non-probability sampling.

Non-probability sampling was used because this study is qualitative. Non-probability sampling is a sampling approach in which the researcher does not include all elements of the population. Some people in the population are exceedingly unlikely to be included in any given sample. As a result, the sample's availability or activity plays a role in the selection process. Non-probability sampling is classified into three types: convenience sampling, quota sampling, and purposive or judgmental sampling (Polit & Beck, 2004:731).

This study's sample was drawn purposively. The sample was purposive because it was carefully formed by selecting individuals based on their understanding of the phenomenon. So, the number of participants was small enough to allow for in-depth interviews. The current study recruited its respondents using three different types of sampling strategies: purposive, criterion, and snowball.

The objective for purposive sampling is to select samples with a substantial amount of data for in-depth analysis (Patton, 2002:230; Henning et al., 2004:45). I used my judgement to choose individuals of the population who met the criteria (De Vos, 2002:99). This criterion meant that my understanding of the problem, the population, the features, and the nature of the study objective was sufficient for me to choose cases deemed to fit

the inclusion criterion (De Vos, 2000:99). Purposive sampling was used to sample participants because participants would provide important perceptions of the phenomenon of interest, adequately answer research questions, and shed light on the understanding of phenomenon (Creswell, 2003:185). The samples that were purposively drawn were academic leaders who oversaw research and publishing policies, and academics who taught, published, and conducted research in the other. I believed I would gather information from two distinct sets of authoritative and reliable knowledge sources, each with a unique perception. They were both professionally impacted by academic freedom in their work conditions (Cresswell, 2009; Denscombe, 2007; Flick, 2009).

It was also ideal to use purposive sampling for the aforementioned two representative samples because academic leaders were making strategic decisions about the overall planning of research programs, ethical concerns, the excellence of the research, and the supervision of students and academics pursuing advanced degrees within the university's ethos. Academics were, on the other hand, adhering to institutional policies set by academic leaders, therefore their perceptions of academic freedom would fundamentally be different from those of academic leaders because management decisions have a positive or negative impact on their areas of teaching and research. The two samples were thus suitable because I believed that academic leaders and academics were reliable sources of information with expert insight and knowledge of academic freedom in regard to their respective roles within the university.

I employed the criterion sampling technique to select academic leaders. It was relatively easy to select academic leaders for an interview. This involved searching through the institution's website, seeking interviews via institutional emails, and outlining the ethical concerns concerning their informed participation. The rationale for employing this technique was to select academic leaders who met a specific criterion or experience in academic freedom (Given, 2008:697-98). I considered academic leaders who were deans and heads of departments in the school of education and school of humanities and social sciences. There were fifteen academic leaders in the study sample.

It was quite difficult to choose a sample of the second set of academics that was similarly purposeful and would fulfil specific criteria like that of academic leaders because they made up a larger and more diverse group within the university. I sought participants who could provide insightful information on their unique experiences with academic freedom. However, I knew it would be challenging to gauge or reach the community of academics who would be willing to take part in a study on academic freedom.

Finding a sufficiently substantial number of academic participants across the university's two schools (School of Education and School of Humanities and Social Sciences) required me to employ a range of purposive sampling strategies. Lee (1993) provided guidance on how to investigate sensitive topics by selecting a sample of academics and academic leaders who could have had something interesting to say about academic freedom. I looked into utilizing similar strategies to get a sample of academics interested to participate in the study. Lee's study concentrated on the methods and means to gain access to divergent or rare populations. Hence, I perceived the processes he elucidated could be used to gain access to other groups who had similar interests in a specific area of study. I accordingly employed two methods described by Lee to identify a broader range of academics to approach for interviews.

Firstly, I adopted criterion sampling to select academics. The sampling technique could be used when an inquirer wants cases or individuals who meet a particular criterion or experience (Given, 2008:697-98). I was aware of certain academics who would be interested in participating in my research because of my job as an academic at UNZA. As a result, I was able to locate and get in touch with academics who I knew supported academic freedom, either by their publications or reputations. Although this strategy would draw criticism for producing a skewed sample of participants, I nonetheless endorsed in two ways. First, the participants met two criteria: their interest and experience in academic freedom. Second, it would be incorrect to conclude that these academics were predisposed in favor of academic freedom at UNZA simply because they had firsthand experienced with it.

In the selection of the sample, I considered academics who were lecturing Political Science, Civic Education, Educational Policy Studies, Religious Education and Literature.

Academics from these disciplines were likely to feel that political and religious opportunists threatened their academic freedom due to the nature of their courses which allow them to air sentiments or views that present the government or religion in a negative light even if such views are valid and crucial for imparting knowledge to their students. Therefore, my first strategy was to identify academics teaching and researching controversial and unconventional topics in their fields of study to ascertain if they had exercised their right to academic freedom to do so.

In order to draw from a larger pool of study participants, I employed "snowball sampling" on academics. Drawing up a sample of academics willing to participate in the interviews proved to be a successful strategy in my perspective. The research method of "snowballing" is widely known and well approved. The snowball sampling technique relies on an interviewee or respondent to propose additional prospective respondents to the researcher. The underlying assumption is that participants who exhibit the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors that the researcher is interested in are more likely to know people who share those traits than the overall population. Newby (2010: 249). (2010: 249).

'Snowballing is a good strategy for accumulating a reasonably large sample, particularly when used in conjunction with a small-scale research study,' argues Denscombe (2007: 18). Snowballing was successful and beneficial to me since I was an insider researcher. I was already working at the institution where the study was being done and was acquainted with other UNZA members. My experience with the university was useful since colleagues assisted in referring me to academics with vast experience with academic freedom. To obtain a balance of perceptions in the sample, I eventually interviewed fifteen academics using different sampling strategies.

4.6.2 Sample Size

To select a sample size, I needed to first identify a sampling frame from which to draw a sample. A sampling frame is a list of the units of analysis or elements, which usually is the same as the population, but different due to practical constraints linked to information availability (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005: 57). As a result, the sampling frame is regarded as "the working population" (Zikmund, 1994: 361). In principle, the sampling frame guides which population should be drawn from. The study's sampling frames were

lists of academics and academic leaders at UNZA. I requested and obtained permission from the UNZA Registrar to utilize the academics list as a sample frame for the study. Hence, the population and sample size of this study were based on the available list of UNZA academics.

The sample size for this was thirty participants. The sample size is the proportion of the total population studied in order to derive conclusions about the complete population (Kothari, 2004: 174). Purposive sampling was employed to select the thirty (30) people who, in my opinion, could provide the most illuminating data on academic freedom at UNZA. An adequate sample size is essential for determining the dependability of the results. So, I assumed the respondents were competent enough to assist me in completing the study task. Respondents or participants were selected based on their claimed knowledge in areas of study relevant to the research, their professional positions and experience (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011:157).

Accordingly, the sample consisted of fifteen (15) academics and fifteen (15) academic leaders from UNZA. The small sample size enabled semi-structured face-to-face interviews to unearth the genuine meaning of academic freedom at UNZA as experienced by the participants. Because of the small sample size, the findings are less generalizable to the greater population of interest (Corbetta, 2003: 49; Patton, 2002: 14). As a result, such research acts as a springboard for larger-scale investigations and provides a more profound understanding that may theory, practise, and specific cases (Neuman, 2007: 143).

Guidelines or a check list of ideal sample characteristics may be used as inclusion criteria (Burns and Grove, 2001:336). The criteria had to be met in order to participate. To begin, academics had to be highly experienced with more than five (5) years of teaching experience in the School of Education and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at UNZA. Academic leaders were expected to be highly experienced UNZA academic leaders with more than ten years of experience in teaching and administration at the institutions indicated above. The second criterion was the willingness to take part in the study. As a result, participants had to be willing to participate in the study, and those who were unwilling to take part were not forced to do so and were therefore excused.

In accordance with the anonymity policy, acronyms and numerals were used to identify each participant in the data presentation and analysis chapter. These abbreviations were obtained from the real job titles of the faculty members: A for Academic and AL for Academic Leader. Numerals and acronyms were combined to form the following symbols: A 1-15 (Academics) and AL 1-15 (Academic Leaders). In total, thirty participants were interviewed.

4.7. Data Collection Procedures

This section describes the procedures I used to gather data from the target participants. According to Berg and Lune (2012:47), data collection in phenomenological research requires applying relevant research procedures as well as choosing suitable study settings and participants. To obtain authorization, informed consent, and assent, I conducted the following steps:

Step One:

I wrote a letter asking permission to conduct the research at the target institution. The institution was UNZA.

Step Two:

Following written approval from the target institution named above, I focused on gaining informed consent from the target study participants within the target institution. The participants were fifteen academics and 15 academic leaders. Similarly, I wrote letters requesting consent from adult research participants over the age of 18. The study did not begin until the participants' consent was obtained. As a result, interviews with research participants were only undertaken once their consent was obtained.

Step Three:

After obtaining written consent from all of the study subjects listed above, I applied for a Certificate of Clearance from the UNISA's Research Ethics Committee (REC). It is the committee in charge of ensuring that every study conducted by UNISA researchers, including staff and students, meets the requisite high standards. The application's goal was to enable me to collect data in the field. The REC research clearance application is a requirement for all researchers at UNISA.

Step Four:

After the University of South Africa's Research Ethics Committee (REC) issued a clearance certificate, the focus shifted to conducting interviews as the final step in the research process before moving on to data analysis.

Step Five:

This study also included an analysis of pertinent documents. The analysed documents were the Zambian Constitution, Zambia Higher Education Act, Educating our Future, Research Policy and Intellectual Property Rights, Research Policy Implementation Manual, UNZA Calendar, and UNZA Strategic Plan. It was determined that analysis in the form of documentary evidence was appropriate to provide a clear context for the interviews and the subject area (academic freedom) itself and how UNZA and the nation at large perceive it. The aim was to see if and how UNZA recognised the concept of academic freedom.

4.7.1. Data Processing and Analysis

The research questions influenced the data analysis I sought to address. According to Peshkin (1993), qualitative data analysis should be approached as an iterative process in which the researcher alternates between data collection and data analysis. Iteration also implies that the researcher does not follow an organized or sequential method but rather alternates between the different phases of the study. Some researchers also describe data analysis as a flexible, intuitive, and creative endeavour that helps lessen the research process's messiness by making sense of the data (Cooley, 2013; Patton, 2015; Talmy, 2011). As a result, I participated in a continuous data analysis process that corresponded with data collecting throughout my research. Charmaz (2000) refers to a data analysis method as grounded theory. The researcher uses inductive approaches to generate theory while gathering data in this methodical methodology. As a result, data gathering, and analysis become two distinct components of the same process. According to Patton (2015), such a procedure is required to provide rigour and consistency to qualitative research.

I transcribed the 30 interviews. I completed the transcription shortly after each interview when my thoughts on the responses were still fresh in my mind, because I was still honing

my typing abilities when the fieldwork began, the transcribing of the interviews was the least fun portion of my study. As a result, it took me a long time to finish the transcription, particularly for the first several interviews. Listening to the audio transcripts of the interviews enabled me to begin coding early in the fieldwork. I downloaded each interview and used *Inqscribe* software to control the pace of the audio as I wrote and to match the audio rate to my typing speed. Even with this program, I took a long time to finish the transcribing. It took me many days to do a single interview at times. Nonetheless, I resisted the urge to submit the audio transcripts to an internet transcription service because I assumed that typing out the transcripts myself would bring me closer to the facts.

Following completing my transcription in December 2018, I analysed the data using traditional qualitative methodologies and analysis. The overall goal of data analysis was to restructure and decrease data pieces for them to make empirical and conceptual sense (Cooley, 2013). Therefore, I used three essential procedures advocated for data reduction and reorganization in my data analysis. The first of them was codification, which Strauss, and Corbin (2015) describe as the process of assigning names to data in order to illustrate broader patterns. Second, I employed categorization, which, according to Patton (2015), is the process of categorizing empirical data based on ideas to build a theme framework to explain the observed events. Finally, I compared my data to incorporate theory into the observable processes and occurrences. To arrange the material from my interviews with academics and academic leaders, I used the NVIVO qualitative analysis program. NVIVO allowed me to organize interview material into broad emerging themes while focusing on individual patterns and meanings.

As previously indicated, the initial step of my data analysis was codification. At this point, I recognized patterns and recurring themes in the data to arrive at a logical explanation of the phenomena under investigation (Erickson, 1986). I started by breaking down the data into small chunks to develop categories, themes, and patterns. Some of the codes emerged from my assessment of relevant literature and the theories and ideas I picked to drive the content and method of my study, especially social capital, and resource dependency theories. After coding the data, I attempted to match categories and

structures to the study's issue. In this approach, I connected some of the categories I created to the study's theoretical framework and incorporated theory into interview data. I established specific data categories because of this procedure. I then utilized the categories, topics, and patterns to develop fresh ideas for my further data research. According to Spinggle (1994), specific first categories derived from the initial data analysis may provide for some interpretation freedom. Finally, I organised the data into conceptual groups concerning academic freedom perceptions by classifying it. As a result, I created a theme framework that described the phenomena under inquiry.

4.8 Strategies for Ensuring the Trustworthiness of the Data

I devoted adequate time with each academic and academic leader to collect helpful, accurate and comprehensive information from them to better comprehend the phenomenon. In addition, the prolonged engagement was consolidated with several follow-up interviews. According to Polit & Beck (2010: 495), prolonged engagement in qualitative research is investing ample time gathering information to have extensive knowledge of the phenomenon to test for erroneous information and distortions and guarantee saturation of relevant categories. Moreover, aside from collecting comprehensive data, prolonged engagement builds rapport and trust with research participants.

In this investigation, the consolidation of various data sources (academics and academic leaders' interview data) and various data collection methods (qualitative interviews and document analysis) was needed to produce a meaningful understanding of academic freedom at UNZA from all avenues explored. Although triangulation does not guarantee validity, it is seen as "a method of ensuring comprehensiveness and fostering a more reflexive analysis of the data" (Mays & Pope, 2000: 51). In this study, triangulation was used to analyze similarities between data acquired from multiple sources and techniques and to discover any contradictions. Thus, triangulation was attained by employing various methods and perspectives during data gathering and analysis. The rationale for triangulation is to ensure a point of convergence, where truth, as exhibited by participants, would be accurately mirrored in the researcher's representation of their lived experiences (Krefting, 1991:219). Furthermore, triangulation employs various reference points to

conclude what constitutes reality to capture a more comprehensive and contextualised picture of the phenomenon (Polit & Beck, 2010:497).

The second criterion for determining trustworthiness in qualitative research is the transferability of the data. Krefting (1991:216) defines transferability as how a qualitative study's results can apply or be generalised to other contexts, settings, situations, and populations. Following the aforesaid, Lincoln and Guba (1985:290) claim that transferability is like quantitative research's external validity and alludes to whether the study's findings apply in other contexts. Polit and Beck (2010:492) also concede that transferability means how study findings may be "generalised" to other contexts or groups.

In the same vein, Streubert and Carpenter (2011:49) believe that transferability refers to the findings that have meanings to others in comparable contexts. While I was fully cognizant of the expectation of establishing whether the results fit or are generalisable to potential users, I employed Lincoln and Guba's (1985:316) criteria of laying the foundation for making transferability judgment possible for intended users. In addition, transferability plans were augmented by a rigorous selection of respondents and by providing adequate descriptive information in the final report so that the end-users of the study may adeptly evaluate the applicability of the findings to other situations.

In light of this expectation, I used the "holy grail" quality criteria described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and later expanded by Guba and Lincoln (1994). This is based on five criteria of trustworthiness that are significant in both quantitative and qualitative research. The criteria include truth value (credibility), applicability (transferability), consistency (dependability), neutrality (confirmability), and authenticity (Polit & Beck 2010:492). When these criteria are strictly observed, they contribute to the accomplishment of quality control and the trustworthiness of the study results.

Quality standards for reporting study findings promotes objectivity, validity, dependability, rigour, openness, and honesty (Focus, 2005:1-2). According to Meulenber-Buskens (1997:111), research quality is defined as how well the study adheres to methodological research requirements. Lablanca (2010:1) defines research trustworthiness as "the demonstration that a study based on its findings is robust and verifiable." Mauthner and

Doucet (2003:413-415) propose that researchers should show how they analyzed the data to ensure quality. All research, whether qualitative or quantitative, must uphold the important criteria of reliability and validity.

Morse et al. (2002:17) argue that a built-in verification mechanism can ensure the authenticity and reliability of qualitative research data. They lend credence to the researcher's capacity to progressively ensure the study's dependability, validity, and rigour. They recommend introducing verification procedures throughout the research process to ensure reliability and validity rather than waiting for external experts to verify accordingly at the end of the research process. To be reliable is to be "authentic, consistent, trustworthy, and able to depend on confident certainty," as defined by the Randon House College Dictionary (1980:1114). Data reliability refers to how well the information in a study corresponds to expectations (Polit & Beck, 2010:373).

On the one hand, "validity" means "being sound, just, and well-founded" (Randon House College Dictionary, 1980:1453). In line with this, Polit & Beck (2010:377) consider validity to be the extent to which a tool assesses the constructs for which it was designed. When a report accurately depicts the features of the phenomenon it sets out to describe, explain, or theorise, it is considered valid (Hammersley, 1987:69). For these concepts to have any meaning in an investigation, it is essential that the researcher prove that they have been considered.

Validity is achieved by ensuring that the research tool is valid and measures what it is supposed to measure (Gray, 2004:206-210). Given this, I ensured the research tool's validity by ensuring that the topics covered, and the interview questions match the variables to be measured. For instance, Mpisi (2010:196) encourages reliability researchers to do pilot studies to test and improve the validity of their research methods before using them in the field.

The principles of reliability and validity as underlying constructs are relevant in a qualitative research based on the human science paradigm. Kvale (1989, in Morse et al., 2002:19) asserts that validation is a vital component in every study that requires examining and questioning various areas to ensure quality. The goal of quality assurance or rigour in a qualitative study is to accurately capture participants' experiences. To

guarantee that qualitative studies like the current one meet quality standards, Krefting (1991:215) proposes using techniques that successfully evaluate rigour without jeopardizing the validity of qualitative research practice.

Participants' faith in the accuracy of the study's findings is referred to as credibility (Polit & Beck, 2010:492). According to Krefting (1991:218), qualitative research is considered credible when it shows an accurate depiction of the human experience that people who have the same experience would immediately recognize and find plausible. Credibility was achieved in this study by extensive interaction with research participants, data triangulation, reaching consensus with a research expert, and researcher competence and ability for such study.

The third criterion for establishing trustworthiness in a qualitative study is dependability. This involves ensuring that results are consistent across different contexts and settings (Polit & Beck, 2010:492). Thomas and Magilvy (2011:152) state that the consistency and reasonable stability of the research process throughout time and among researchers and approaches is what constitutes its dependability. I ensured the dependability of the study's findings by ensuring that all processes adhered to the philosophical and methodological standards of phenomenology (Rose, Beeby & Parker, 1995:1126). I also made certain that data collection and analysis, as well as interpretation methodologies, were explicitly stated for others to confirm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290).

Prior to starting this inquiry, I first became acquainted with the basic rules of the phenomenological method, which enhanced the first strategy of methodological consistency. The second strategy entailed thoroughly describing various steps of data collection, processing, and interpretation in order to minimize inconsistencies in the study process.

In accordance with the study's protocol and the guiding research question, data were collected at the appropriate times and places. My supervisor and I jointly designed the coding checks, and they were found to be highly congruent. Furthermore, quality checks were performed to reduce the effects of bias and inaccurate information. Lincoln and Guba (1985:290) stated that a reader may use the data trail produced by these operations to examine data, perform secondary analysis, or ensure data consistency. Because of

this, I had faith that similar results could be achieved with the same individuals in the same setting by a similarly educated researcher.

The fourth criterion of trustworthiness that a researcher must establish is confirmability, which refers to the objectivity or neutrality of the study findings. According to Polit & Beck (2010:492), objectivity is the likelihood that two or more independent individuals will agree on the veracity, applicability, and significance of the information. Lincoln & Guba (1985:290) advise that the reader can use a benchmark to verify whether the inquiry findings were determined by the participants' honest thoughts and not the researcher's conjectures. In line with Polit & Beck's (2010:492) viewpoint, I was conscious of the need for study findings to reflect participants' true voices and circumstances rather than my own misinformed biases and perceptions. Therefore, I employed reflexivity, audibility, and a flexible coding scheme to attain complete objectivity:

I was aware of how my assumptions regarding academic freedom might affect the study's results. To address this, I used strategies that would encourage the self-reflective approach required to objectively access the "field" (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011:34). Reflexivity, which Finlay (2008:15–17) likens to Husserl's reduction, was used to achieve objectivity. Additionally, Finlay (2009:12) contends that the researcher's fore-structure must be acknowledged and placed at the forefront in order to distinguish what belongs to the researcher from the participants rather than being completely bracketed out. Finlay (2008: 17–18) claims that this process is characterized by a dialectic tension between an attempt at reductive focus and reflective self-awareness; between bracketing out researcher pre-understandings and using them as a source of information.

Polit & Beck (2010:110) assert that reflexivity is crucial in qualitative research because it enables qualitative researchers to generate findings without being influenced by their own biases. Reflexivity is described as a critical introspection as well as the evaluation of one's own values and opinions that may influence the gathering and interpretation of data. Reflecting critically on one's research and attempting to comprehend how one's values and ideas may affect it helps to increase the credibility of the results of a study (Jootun, McGhee & Marland, 2009:42). In this study, I adopted self-reflexivity to portray the academic and academic leaders' lived experiences and meanings.

Therefore, reflexivity was accomplished by recalling and taking into account prior knowledge about the lived experiences of academics and academic leaders gleaned from earlier research experience and an initial literature review (refer to chapter two). In addition, I made sure that my own personal experiences and biases did not cloud my judgement during the research, which further confirmed the importance of self-reflection. As a result, I had to have an open mind and pay close attention to the participants' perspectives, regardless of whether they aligned with or contradicted everything I'd ever learned before.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:319), an audit trail, which is the method by which the researcher keeps track of the results of the investigation, can help establish the study's objectivity. An audit trail, as defined by Polit & Beck (2010:547), is "a systematic documenting of what was done in a study that allows an independent auditor of qualitative research to draw inferences about the reliability of the data." Furthermore, Cutcliffe & McKenna (1999:377-78) recommend that the researcher allow other researchers to undertake an "audit trail" or "decision trail" so that their "route" of the judgments made during data analysis may be examined or validated, which increases confirmability (objectivity).

As a result, I improved the research's auditability by adopting Halpern's (1983) criteria for creating an audit trail, as stated by Lincoln and Guba (1985:319). As a result, I improved the research's auditability by advocating Halpern's (1983) audit trail criteria, as cited in Lincoln and Guba (1985:319).

- Developing and refining an interview guide.
- Fundamentals, especially those concerning digital recordings, field notes, and transcriptions.
- Reducing information to its essentials, such as through the use of codes or summaries.
- Reviewing memos and e-mails from the thesis advisor, who has performed exhaustive readings.

In addition to these strategies, I employed "memoing" throughout the data collection process to keep track of "reliable audit trails" and to write down crucial ideas and "felt sense" that other researchers may use in their own investigations. The data presentation and analysis processes are completed in Chapter 5 and 6 by employing codes with full data. The evidentiary points in the transcripts are coded with these identifiers so that they can be easily retrieved at any time. If an audit of the investigation's findings is required, the codes assist the reader to conceptualise the data within the context of the transcripts.

Authenticity is the fifth criterion Guba & Lincoln (1994) utilized to evaluate the credibility of a qualitative investigation. Polit & Beck (2010:493) describe authenticity as the technique in which researchers truthfully and accurately depict a variety of realities of the topic under study. A study is regarded as being authentic if it maintains the perceptions of the participants' lives as they are lived (Polit & Beck, 2010:493). This is why it's important for the reader to be able to revisit the experience being addressed in phenomenological research. It is for this reason that a phenomenological study is deemed to be authentic if it allows the reader to relive the experience that is being discussed. Van Manen (1990:27) calls this "phenomenological nod" the expression that someone makes after reading a lived experience narrative, "This is the experience I could have had." This supports the premise that lived experience can establish an accurate phenomenological description as long as the lived experience is validated (Van Manen, 1990:27). According to Polit and Beck (2010:493), a truly authentic text allows readers to develop higher sensitivity to the difficulties depicted in the research stories by appropriately including elements of mood, feelings, experiences, and situations to enable improved comprehension.

By presenting the "hard truth" about academic freedom in evocative, expressive, transcendent, and poetic language, I allowed the emotive components of the observations to create a "phenomenological reverberation" or "resonance" in the reader. The reader "experiences" academic freedom through the "eye," "skin," and "heart" of academics and academic leaders who witnessed the events depicted (Van der Zalm & Bergum, 2000:212). According to Van Manen (2011:1), the expressive way in which the research results were conveyed should help readers feel better and better understand the

academics' and academic leaders' daily life. To help readers comprehend and empathise with what it's like to have academic freedom at a publicly funded university, I felt obligated to use language's graphic power to make the word "authentic" come to life (Van Manen, 2011:2).

4.9 Positionality Statement

As a qualitative researcher, I was primarily responsible for data acquisition, interpretation, and analysis (Patton, 2015). In qualitative research, the researcher's positionality, identity, and experiences are crucial. A researcher may find it challenging to control their responsibilities during the research process if they become too familiar with the research setting to represent that community accurately. Beginning as an outsider or stranger, the researcher may become an intimate confidante to the subjects and the study site. When a researcher becomes overly familiar with his or her research site, he or she may lose the ability to critically view events and actors there. This could cast doubt on the research findings and interpretations. Therefore, it is essential for a qualitative researcher to be as transparent as possible regarding his or her positionality. Consequently, I will discuss my function as a researcher.

Since 2007, I have taught educational administration and policy studies at the School of Education of the University of Zambia. I earned a bachelor's degree in education in 2006. I earned a master's degree in educational administration from the same institution in 2009. As a student and a professor at the UNZA, I learned about the Zambian higher education system and its experiences with academic freedom. UNZA was my first employment after completing my bachelor's and master's degrees, and I've worked there for my entire career. From this perspective, I was privy to this investigation.

Other than that, I was an interloper in this investigation. First, I am not involved in power structures within or outside the university, such as the Senate, UNZA's highest policy-making body. If I were, I could have affected existing higher education. Second, as a novice academic, I have limited influence over university selections.

My position as a researcher involved two identities: a PhD candidate educated in South Africa and a Zambian citizen who was nurtured and educated in part within the UNZA

community. My expertise as a professor at UNZA enabled me to position myself as an insider, as I discovered numerous parallels between my experience as an early-career academic at Zambia's premier university and the academics I spoke with during my fieldwork. I could relate to some of the participants' frustrations with academic freedom restrictions. I did not imply, however, that my background made me an insider in all university environments. During my fieldwork, I interacted with numerous academics and academic leaders and visited numerous UNZA locations I had never visited as a student or instructor. I taught thousands of students in the School of Education as a professor. Consequently, my work rarely related to the academic interests of faculty members in fields other than education.

As a doctoral student from South Africa, I was exempt from some of the scrutiny that would have been applied to a doctoral student from Zambia. Early in the investigation, I had the impression that my credentials as a foreign PhD student helped me enter the research site. Most participants appeared anxious to discuss their work with an outsider unfamiliar with the routines of a UNZA academic. Multiple interviewees were impressed by a PhD candidate's interest in academic freedom in Zambia. Several senior faculty members expressed their delight at assisting a student embarking on the same path they had taken many years ago.

My history as a faculty member at UNZA, experiences, and position all contributed to specific hypotheses regarding the current study. I've been a member of the UNZA community for many years, having earned my bachelor's and master's degrees there between 2001 and 2006. UNZA was also my first employment after graduating from college. I became a Staff Development Fellow (SDF) in 2007, a lecturer trainee in 2008, and a full-time lecturer in 2009. As a result, I had spent the previous 23 years in the community where I was pursuing my education. I was raised with a narrative about the dangers and limitations of academic freedom at UNZA.

As a student and faculty member at the UNZA, I acquired prior experiential knowledge of the Zambian academy and its experiences with academic freedom. This familiarity with the research situation likely influenced my subjects' perceptions and acceptance of me. Certain participants' familiarity with me enhanced their candour in describing their

experiences with academic freedom at UNZA. However, this familiarity has a disadvantage. Because I was a lecturer at the School of Education, I needed to be aware of how my participants viewed me and how this may have impacted the veracity and clarity of their responses during the interviews. For instance, some participants may have refrained from providing information about an occurrence or event at UNZA because they viewed me as an insider well-versed in all UNZA activities (Vincent & Warren, 2001). Consequently, throughout the interviews, I endeavoured to ask as many clarifying questions as possible whenever I felt my interviewees were taking my knowledge for granted or overestimating it.

As a member of the community I was investigating, I was responsible for intuitively comprehending my role as a researcher. Patton (2015) cautions that the best way to protect the integrity of the research, in my case, is to work openly, transparently, and reflexively through the subjectivities and biases that one brings to the research site. Consequently, throughout the research study, I made a concerted effort to avoid projecting my own meanings and knowledge onto those of my respondents (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In addition, I took deliberate measures to safeguard ethical issues such as confidentiality, privacy, and representation (Maxwell, 1990).

During certain interviews, I appreciated hearing about the faculty member's research interests, particularly in the sciences. I pondered whether it would be a good notion for me to transition from the humanities to the sciences at UNZA. Occasionally, both during the interviews and while transcribing them, I attempted to substitute my experiences for those of the interviewees. However, I frequently realised that the story I was creating was based on the participants' experiences and not my own. To avoid becoming too emotionally attached to the faculty members and, as a result, uncritical of their actions, I frequently attempted to assemble my thoughts and restrain myself when dealing with these conflicts. Consequently, I worked throughout the study to defer any preconceived notions I may have had about how faculty members would have experienced academic freedom to draw more extensively on their interpretations and understandings (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). I kept in mind that my positionality, prior assumptions, and

experiences were intertwined with my perceptions and translations of the phenomena I was investigating (Patton, 2015). I had to refrain from inserting my own experiences.

4.10 Ethical Considerations

The critical ethical issues for this study were divided into three categories: participants, institutions, and the scientific integrity of the entire research activity. Norwood (2000:57) recommends that researchers apply themselves to resolving expected and unexpected ethical problems from the moment the research problem is identified until the last step of publishing the results. I was cognizant that the ethical standards of a qualitative research come from the fluid and dynamic character of the research process; consequently, unforeseen ethical challenges may arise at any time (Streubert and Carpenter, 2011:60). Apart from sticking to the ethical concerns inherent in the principles of independence, benevolence, and fairness, I remained open to the plausibility of novel and unexplored ethical issues, particularly during data collection. The following section discusses how ethical concerns were adhered to concerning participants and the institution involved in the investigation, including the scientific credibility.

I erased all identifying information from quotes obtained from interview transcripts because I was concerned about infringing the participants' right to privacy. I was able to distinguish between the two categories in my sample without revealing any personal information by utilising the phrases "academics" and "academic leaders." Every direct quote from the interviews was assigned a number and saved in a database.

Wengraf (2001: 187) lists confidentiality as an ethical requirement, which includes "that certain confidential materials may not be used in any form, whether anonymized," therefore I handled the interview data with care to avoid causing any harm to the participants. I redacted several details from the interviews due to concerns about respondents' privacy. I chose to withhold some information from the participants because I didn't want any of them to be placed in potentially hazardous situations in their jobs as a result of this study. I took similar precautions to protect the university's reputation.

To avoid any deception, I took several precautions in regard to the research participants. In my initial e-mail seeking their participation in the interviews, I made sure they were

well-informed and had a clear awareness of the topic and type of study, as well as the potential ethical considerations. I introduced myself as a doctoral student at UNISA's Department of Educational Foundations. I stated that my principal focus academic freedom at UNZA. I informed anyone who might be interested that I was doing a phenomenology study (a qualitative method utilising semi-structured interviews) and that their participation was entirely voluntary. If they were interested, I also provided them the opportunity of receiving interview questions ahead of our scheduled appointment. Finally, I informed them that their privacy would be respected because the transcribing would be done by myself.

I further stated that if transcript copies were requested, I would make them accessible. I also assured them that I would respect their right to make any changes they saw necessary and remove any information from the results that would be detrimental to their career. However, no respondent requested transcripts. Furthermore, respondents were advised that they could opt out of the study. Fortunately, no one did.

When developing my interview questions, I paid close attention to the sensitivity of the questions, particularly with reference to academics whose research interests may have caused issues with their academic freedom. In contrast to academic leaders, whose interview questions were more administrative in nature, academics' interview questions were more personal in nature, relating to their research within the setting of a higher learning institution. For these reasons, the phraseology of the interview questions was given extensive and careful consideration to ensure that participants did not feel endangered or uncomfortable. When I received a positive response to my interview invitation, I gave the participants the option of reviewing the interview questions prior to the meeting if they so wished. I assured the participants that they would not feel obligated to share information that may cause personal or professional harm.

I took precautions to avoid dishonesty and ensured that the academics and academic leaders involved in the study had the right to know exactly what the research was about from the start and receive assurance that the inquiry would be conducted with professional honesty and transparency. Furthermore, I ensured that informed consent

was obtained by providing a detailed description of the study's objectives and purpose, as well as how the information acquired would be utilized.

Regarding trustworthiness, I was informed that it was my responsibility to convey the findings of the inquiry without embellishment and to base my conclusions solely on the material presented in the interview transcripts. I also kept the research participants anonymous in the results section by referring to them by codes and omitting any references to their names, disciplines, and faculties that may have identified them.

Informed consent is an essential component of research and entails respecting participants' self-determination rights. Streubert and Carpenter (2011:61) stated that informed consent is essential for any research involving identifiable participants and requires participants to have adequate knowledge about the inquiry. According to Polit and Beck (2010:127), informed consent entails participants obtaining adequate information and having the capacity and right to accept or decline voluntary participation, and it signifies the researcher's attempts to uphold and protect the participant's autonomy. Therefore, I employed a consent form to secure a written agreement from prospective participants.

Researchers should not conduct experiments on human subjects without first acquiring their informed consent, as stated by Polit & Beck (2010:127). It specifies the ground rules for an individual to give their informed consent to participate in a study. Informed consent requires that participants receive all necessary information about the study, that they fully understand that information, and that they be given the option to either agree to or decline participation in the study. As part of the informed consent process, I had every participant sign a consent form (refer to Appendices G and H). Each time I conducted this study, I did so in accordance with the law by first getting the participants' informed consent (Hamersley & Atkinson, 1995:264).

I made sure the interviewees knew what to expect from the study, its scope, the types of questions to be asked, how their answers would be utilized, and that their identity would be protected before we began (Richards & Schwartz, 2002:137). In addition, the interviews were scheduled far in advance to give participants time to consider their participation and formulate questions. Participants were also informed that they could end

their involvement at any time, as well as refuse to disclose information or ask questions if they were unclear (Burns & Groove, 2005:192-195). Furthermore, the study's methodology and strategy were clarified, and any questions that arose from them were answered.

To further ensure that no data was lost throughout this data collection procedure, participants' permission was obtained to audio record the interviews. More importantly, it freed me up from having to take copious notes. Instead, I focused on the non-verbal cues conveyed by interviewees. I only took field notes to back up critical verbal cues that the audio recorder would not capture. By obtaining participants' informed agreement before conducting interviews, the study ensured that their participation was truly voluntary.

My position as a researcher was also explained as an independent individual with no ulterior motives. Participants were also advised that the data would be used for knowledge or education purposes only and to recommend strategies to improve and safeguard the academic freedom of academics at the UNZA. This clarification of my position helped participants view me as a neutral person, minimising the chances of gathering biased or fabricated data.

I adhered to the ethical obligation of beneficence, making sure that participants were not subjected to any hurt or discomfort throughout the interviews by promptly addressing any issues that would cause harm or unease (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011:61). By guaranteeing voluntary involvement after obtaining written authorization, the participants' autonomy and sense of dignity were also preserved. Thematic and relevant questions were developed to encourage participants to share their experiences with me rather than to intimidate or corner them.

An essential element upheld during the investigation process was confidentiality. Polit & Beck (2010:129) stipulate that confidentiality is the assurance that any information participants share will not be publicly reported in a way that exposes them and will not be made available to others. I was fully cognizant that the in-depth nature of qualitative research meant that participants' confidentiality was vital and had to be safeguarded throughout the research period. Participants' right to confidentiality was founded on the ethical principle of justice, which states that people have the power to decide the time,

extent, and general circumstances under which personal data, including beliefs, practices, opinions, and records, were shared with, or withheld from others (Burns & Groove, 2005:186). I obtained the participants' right to privacy by requesting them to select the venue for the interviews. As a result, most participants chose to be interviewed from their offices. Furthermore, I ensured that participant information was not made available to people other than I by utilising password protection and using identification codes instead of real names. Additionally, this thesis's direct quotations would not expose a participant's identity, which was concealed in codes (Polit & Beck, 2010:129).

Anonymity is strongly linked to confidentiality and is the safest means of maintaining confidentiality. Strict anonymity happens when the researcher cannot connect an individual participant with specific information (Polit & Beck, 2010:129). Burns & Grove (2005:194) argue that confidentiality guarantees that any data participants share will not be made available to parties apart from those involved in the study. In contrast, anonymity ensures that disclosing information about participants' identities is not revealed during presentations, reports, and publications.

I continuously reminded and guaranteed the participants that their personal information would not be carelessly handled (Norwood, 2000:68). I was cognizant that if any concern of breach of confidentiality lingered in participants' thoughts, they could deliberately conceal valuable information or choose to share erroneous information. To relieve their anxiety, participants were informed that the findings would be presented in the nomothetic (generalised) descriptions as opposed to the idiographic (individualised) descriptions. This approach assisted in ensuring the anonymity of participants and minimised the possibility of connecting a specific individual to a particular verbatim expression in the final report (Polit & Beck, 2010:130).

Participants were fairly treated, with the understanding that the intimate and private nature of association with participants raises unusual ethical issues. Streubert & Carpenter (2011:65) caution researchers that being the research instrument entails that the researcher comes to know participants very well, often to the extent that vagueness of responsibilities emerges. As Ramos (1989:57) recommends, I was aware of this vagueness, so I was steadfast in the "*instrument*" position as opposed to taking the

"*therapist*" position. Therefore, to be impartial to participants, I controlled the interview process and stayed focused in the interview by avoiding a therapeutic event. I refrained from raising questions that would give rise to more answers than they initially agreed. Upon the conclusion of each interview, I once again addressed issues that required further elaboration (Streubert & Carpenter 2011:65).

4.10 Summary

I discussed why one should utilise both the phenomenological study design and the qualitative approach in this chapter. For this study, semi-structured in-person interviews and a detailed analysis of supporting documentation were preferred. This chapter also included ethical considerations, data collection methodologies, and sample strategies. Not only that, but I also discussed how to determine whether or not something is trustworthy. In the following chapter, I present the findings of semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis of academic and academic leaders at UNZA on the topic of academic freedom.

CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings that the study has yielded. The chapter provides an overview of the problem, including the research questions at the centre of this study. The research questions frame the findings by providing focus and direction. The findings are therefore presented in a way that speaks to the problem. The literature review chapter established the absence of empirical studies portraying the perceptions about academic freedom among Zambian academics. To fill these gaps, a structure has to be applied to the findings that have been unearthed in the current study.

The literature review in chapter two indicated a dearth of literature highlighting lecturers' perspectives on academic freedom. Moreover, while perceptions of academic freedom have informed research, scant attention has been paid to the voices of academics in Zambia. Thus, the scholarship on academic freedom can benefit enormously from the addition of the voices of Zambian academics on the perceptions of the subject. Thus, this study explores how faculty at UNZA perceive themselves and their professional identities in response to institutional surroundings that regulate their pursuit of knowledge.

- The overarching research question is “How do UNZA academics and academic leaders perceive academic freedom?” The following sub-questions supported the primary research question:
 1. How do academics and academic leaders understand academic freedom?
 2. How do these academics and academic leaders perceive the practice of academic freedom within UNZA?
 3. What do academics and academic leaders perceive as helping promote and improve academic freedom in the 21st century?

As stated above, the findings of this study are presented according to the research questions. This primary focus is to mobilise academics' responses in Zambia around the themes dictated by the questions. All data in this study were collected in the last half of

2018 and therefore depict the situation. The chapter is divided into four (4) sections for the logical presentation of research findings. The first section is on the demographic profile of the research participants. The second section presents the understandings of academic freedom by academics and academic leaders at UNZA. The following section presents findings of how academics perceive the practice of academic freedom. Finally, the fourth section presents findings derived from perceptions about promoting and improving academic freedom.

The findings are supported by several direct citations from participant responses and crucial extracts from document analysis. The participants are designated by codes for clarity and source-specificity. Each participant in the study received a symbol consisting of the first letters of their faculty positions and a number. The symbols used in this section are Academics (A) 1-15 and Athletics (AL) 1-15. (Academic Leaders). Table 2 shows the symbols used to symbolise each of the 30 participants and 7 policy documents discussed in this chapter.

Table 1: Symbols Used for the Sources of Data

Symbols	Sources of Data
A 1-15	Academics
AL 1-15	Academic Leaders
UNZAP 1-4	<u>UNZA Policy</u> UNZAP 1: UNZA Calendar (2015) UNZAP 2: Research Policy and Intellectual Property (2009) UNZAP 3: UNZA Strategic Plan (2017) UNZAP 4: UNZA Quality Assurance Framework (2018)

ZNP 1-3	<u>Zambia National Policy</u> ZNP 1: The Constitution of Zambia (2016) ZNP 2: Zambia Higher Education Act (2013) ZNP 3: Educating our Future (1996)
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5.2 Demographic Profile of Participants

The participants' demographics are statistical data about the characteristics of the research participants/respondents who took part in this research project. These comprise all the research participants' background data considered necessary and relevant to the study. A research participant also called a respondent, is well informed on the phenomenon being studied and willing to give information (Babbie, 2007: 186). It is worth noting that participants A 1-15 were all very experienced UNZA academics with over five (5) years of lecturing experience. Participants AL 1-15 were also very experienced UNZA academic leaders with over ten years of work experience in lecturing and administration. Tables 2 and 3 below provide information on the demographic profile for each research participant of the study.

This study relied primarily on semi-structured interviews to capture data (Patton, 2015). I gained a greater understanding of their emotions, thought patterns, perspectives, and experiences through interviews with UNZA faculty. This helped me illuminate how these faculty members organised, understood, and made sense of their professional lives concerning academic freedom. The interviews allowed me to comprehend how faculty members undertook their academic pursuits and the affordances and constraints of academic freedom. The advantage of the semi-structured interviews was that they provided "access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which a culture constructs the world" (Meisenbach, 2004, p. 73). Seidman (2006) defines an interview as an inter-subjective exchange between an interviewer and an interviewee, which is motivated by "an interest in understanding the lived experiences of other people and the meaning they make of that experience... an interest in other people's stories because they have value" (p. 10). Since my study aimed to investigate how academics and

academic leaders from Zambia, I needed to obtain their perspectives on how academic freedom evolved at various points in the institution's history.

I conducted interviews with 30 individuals, including 15 academicians and 15 academic leaders whom I purposefully selected before beginning fieldwork. I interviewed eleven Humanities faculty members and nineteen NS faculty members. Six faculty members had been instructors for over 30 years, 14 for 18 and 30 years, and ten for 4 and 16 years. Among those interviewed, there were 10 females and 20 males. Five participants held a master's degree, whereas 25 held a doctorate. Twelve had obtained their highest degrees in Africa, one in Australia, one in Belgium, five in Canada, four in Japan, two in New Zealand, and two in the United Kingdom. Only one participant earned her highest degree through a sandwich program; Table 2 summarises the demographic information of the faculty members I spoke with.

Table 2: Summary of Demographic Information for Academic Participants

SN	Code	Gender	Department/School	Date and Place of Interview	Years employed
1	A1	M	Civic Education	Conducted on 1 st October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Seven years
2	A2	M	Religious Education	Conducted on 2 nd October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Seven years
3	A3	F	Music	Conducted on 2 nd October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Eight years
4	A4	M	Linguistics	Conducted on 3 rd October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Eight years

5	A5	M	Public Administration	Conducted on 4 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	13 years
6	A6	M	Political Science	Conducted on 5 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	12 years
7	A7	M	Library and Information Science	Conducted on 8 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Five years
8	A8	M	Adult Education	Conducted on 8 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	25 years
9	A9	M	Population Studies	Conducted on 9 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	15 years
10	A10	M	Political Science	Conducted on 10 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	24 years
11	A11	M	Development Studies	Conducted on 11 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	26 years
12	A12	F	Development Studies	Conducted on 11 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Seven years
13	A13	M	Economics	Conducted on 12 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Seven years

14	A14	F	Civic Education	Conducted on 16 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Six years
15	A15	M	Political Science	Conducted on 17 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	16 years

Table 3: Summary of Demographic Information for Academic Leader Participants

SN	Code	Gender	Department/School	Date and Place of Interview	Years employed
1	AL 1	M	Economics and Management of Education	Conducted on 3 rd October 2018 in the interviewee's office	15 years
2	AL 2	M	Special Education	Conducted on 3 rd October 2018 in the interviewee's office	14 years
3	AL 3	M	Curriculum Studies	Conducted on 4 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	13 years
4	AL 4	M	Linguistics	Conducted on 9 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	13 years
5	AL 5	M	Linguistics	Conducted on 10 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	20 years

6	AL 6	M	Literacy and Language Education	Conducted on 17 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	33 years
7	AL 7	F	Religious Studies	Conducted on 18 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	15 years
8	AL 8	M	Teacher Education	Conducted on 19 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	31 years
9	AL 9	M	Library and Information Science	Conducted on 23 rd October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Ten years
10	AL 10	M	Educational Administration and Policy Studies	Conducted on 24 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	14 years
11	AL 11	M	Educational Administration and Policy Studies	Conducted on 25 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	15 years
12	AL 12	M	Adult Education	Conducted on 26 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	26 years
13	AL 13	F	Adult Education	Conducted on 29 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	28 years
14	AL 14	M	Civic Education	Conducted on 30 th October 2018 in the interviewee's office	26 years

15	AL 15	M	Political Science	Conducted on 31 st October 2018 in the interviewee's office	Ten years
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It was essential for me to ensure that all the research participants were suitable people to participate in the study. One way of doing this was to ensure that the research participants had substantial experience and expertise to give in-depth information on academic freedom. The participants' substantial experience and expertise with academic freedom were essential to the study because it was based on academics' and academic leaders' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA. For this reason, only participants well versed in academic freedom were the most suitable to give informed answers and responses to the research questions.

Since the study employed purposive sampling, the gender balance was not considered because the research was mainly interested in participants knowledgeable about or experienced with academic freedom. The people targeted by the study were well vested in the study's overall purpose. This factor did not affect participants' perceptions because the emphasis was on capturing varied perspectives about the topic under study from male or female participants, provided they were knowledgeable and experienced.

This study interviewed thirty people at UNZA who are informed about academic freedom. All interviews were semi-structured yet open-ended. The semi-structured interviews for this study were conducted with fifteen (15) academics and fifteen (15) academic leaders. Interviewees were advised of the intended location and time ahead of time. All of the participants signed the consent papers. The consent letter was delivered to each participant on paper. I discussed the study's objectives with each interviewee to set expectations. I informed the participants that the study would not hurt them in any way, no matter how they answered. Consent included permission to use a voice recorder to record all interviews. All interview transcripts were verbatim transcribed verbatim. I adhered to the ethical rules provided by UNISA's ethics committee. All participants received a copy of the certificate verifying the study's ethical approval.

5.3 Participants' Understanding of Academic Freedom

The research yielded a plethora of responses from the academics and academic leaders' understandings of the concept of academic freedom. This provided a basis to consider how academics and academic leaders define academic freedom for themselves. Two major themes emerged from participant understanding of academic freedom: the first is the "expressive dimension", in which academics felt that academic freedom meant expressing themselves without interference or restrictions. The second theme captures the engagement dimension, which means engaging in knowledge production without interference or restrictions. These themes are presented in turn below.

5.3.1 The Expressive Dimension

The majority of respondents agreed that academic freedom signifies that academics and students can speak their minds without fear of retribution from higher-ups or outside authorities. They also connected free speech, both within and outside the classroom, to the concept of academic freedom. Most respondents said they would use their academic freedom to pursue their passions for creative writing, academic discussion, scientific brilliance, and public service. To that end, I will introduce this "expressive dimension" sub-theme in the following paragraphs.

Academic freedom, according to some respondents, is the absence of arbitrary constraints on academics' and students' right to express themselves in the classroom. Others explained that what they meant by "academic freedom" was the unrestricted ability of scholars to debate issues related to their fields of study. In addition, it was the students' and academics' rights to speak their minds openly in the classroom without fear of reprimand. What's more, it meant academics had more leeway in their pedagogical choices, including the ability to use a wide range of approaches and select their own topics for classes. Some examples of how participants addressed the aforementioned theme are provided in the form of direct quotes below:

Participant A 2:

My simple perspective is that it is the freedom of lecturers to express their ideas while teaching in the classroom. It is also the freedom of students to express

themselves freely whilst learning in a lecture or tutorial. You are free to give examples of real-life experiences within your community and country regarding your expertise. One needs to have an open mind as a lecturer to talk about issues affecting the nation in the classroom, and students need to be free to ask questions or provide divergent views without fearing the lecturer. (Interviewed on 2nd October 2018).

Participant A 10:

Before talking about academic freedom, I can tell you about freedom. Freedom means having the liberty to do whatever it is that you choose to do. So, when we narrow that down to academic freedom, it means that I am free as a lecturer to do academic activities as I understand them. So, for example, I am guided by the approved course outline when teaching, but all I teach is entirely up to me. Nobody should stand behind me to say you have to teach this or that. However, one should be careful not to introduce controversial matters which do not relate to his subject of specialisation. (Interviewed on 10th October 2018).

Participant AL 3:

I understand that academicians and our students should experience an atmosphere where they can freely express themselves verbally on any topic of their specialisation, especially topics that they have been engaged in as a university to teach. So, we should not be looking behind to see if anyone is listening to us as we teach in our area of specialisation. I should be free to express myself in my areas of specialisation as I teach in the lecture theatre. (Interviewed on 4th October 2018).

Participant AL 15:

Academic freedom is the capacity to talk freely on any topic in a classroom context without fear of retaliation from superiors or legal ramifications from the state. When addressing contentious themes in the classroom, one must proceed with prudence (Interviewed on 31st October 2018).

The expressive dimension has furthermore captured the freedom of expression in research. According to some responders, academic freedom is the opportunity of lecturers and students to do research without fear of repercussions (such as dismissal or jail time). For some, this meant knowing they wouldn't face repercussions from their school's management or local politicians for studying matters outside of their field. According to several responders, academic freedom is the assurance that instructors and researchers can discuss their findings and incorporate them into their curricula and pedagogy without fear of retaliation from superiors or students at their workplace or elsewhere.

Some of the perspectives are captured in the extracts below:

Participant A 7:

Academic freedom is the freedom of expression of lecturers and students to pursue research and publication of research findings without fear of university management and government. (Interviewed on 8th October 2018).

Participant AL 5:

It is the freedom for scholars, students, and researchers to investigate anything related to their discipline without fear of reprisal from anybody. It is also the freedom to publish their findings without fear of reprisal and for lecturers to use those findings in their teaching without fear of reprisal from anybody and use those findings to develop new courses and new programs without fear of reprisal from anybody, whether from within the institution where they operate or from outside the institution, if they are operating within the boundaries of the legal provisions of that particular land. That is how I would look at academic freedom. (Interviewed on 10th October 2018).

Participant AL 12:

It is the freedom to conduct research in-depth and objectively on issues that one wants, without fear or favour, without fear of being booked or being suspected of supporting one group of people or another. (Interviewed on 26th October 2018).

A third way the expressive dimension emerged from the study was that academic freedom was the freedom of expression of academics and students in writing. The participants believed that academic freedom gave academics and students the freedom to express their divergent views in writing within their fields of expertise without fear of discipline or retaliation. These views are illustrated below:

Participants A1:

I think academic freedom has to do with one's ability to express themselves in writing without fear or intimidation from management or the politicians. I think that is academic freedom. In other words, one's ability to write about anything without worrying about what will become of them if other parties read that information. When someone writes something, one must look at the article with an open mind and not be aggrieved. They should be able to learn and use the information. If it does not meet what they believe in, they should discard the information without tormenting the people who have written it. I think that is the basics of academic freedom. (Interviewed on 1st October 2018).

Participant AL8:

It means lecturers can express themselves freely both in writing and orally. A person should write on anything without fear of being punished by the government or the institution. (Interviewed on 19th October 2018).

The final manifestation of the expressive dimension was the freedom of expression in public debate. Five participants (A 9, AL 2, AL 9, AL 11, and AL 14) intimated that academic freedom was the freedom of academics to debate or comment on various issues of public concern within their fields of expertise based on research or scholarly work. Additionally, they stated that academics were experts in various fields who could enrich the public debate on important matters to society with their intelligent commentary.

The verbatim quotations below provide evidence of the raised views:

Participant AL 2:

I think academic freedom in the university, from the interactions I have had is the freedom of lecturers or the academic staff to express themselves on national issues that they feel may affect society. They give their opinion and have no limits on whether their ideas are correct or wrong without fear of reprisal or victimisation. I think that is the perception I have of academic freedom. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

Participant A4:

My understanding of academic freedom is that academic community members can articulate issues based on their understanding. This entails a situation where lecturers from different departments and schools give informed opinions on national issues that affect society based on their academic expertise and horizon. So, academics should have the liberty to articulate issues without fear or favour regarding academic freedom. However, of course, those issues must be based on research or on also scholarly work. So that should be shared within the confines of the university and to the nation at large. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

The forgoing verbatims illustrate the emerging views of the participants on the academics' entitlement to express themselves freely in a broad array of related academic activities. In the section that follows, I present the understandings anchored on the freedom to engage, or the engagement dimension.

5.3.2 The Engagement Dimension

Another central theme that emerged from the participants was the freedom of engaging in various academic activities. Seven academic leaders and three academics (A6, A7, A11, AL 1, AL 4, AL 5, AL 6, AL9, AL10 and AL 12) provided a comprehensive and holistic definition of academic freedom. These participants understood and comprehensively defined academic freedom as the freedom of academics and students to engage in a wide range of academic activities involved in knowledge generation without undue or unreasonable interference.

The following are verbatim quotations from the responses of the participants to support the findings above:

Participant A 11:

Suffice to say, academic freedom is a very complex term, and there is much controversy around it. However, from where I stand, I think it is just merely the freedom of inquiry by faculty members and students to pursue their mission without being censored or scared of repercussions. This freedom we academics are supposed to enjoy, the immunity for academics to do their academic work in the most dignified and protected manner without fearing the religious, political powers or any other power to achieve our goals. In a nutshell, that is my understanding of academic freedom. (Interviewed on 11th October 2018).

Participant AL 1:

Basically, academic freedom is the freedom bestowed on faculty members and students of higher learning institutions like a university to conduct their academic activities of teaching, learning, research, and community services, without censorship, repercussions, or any harm. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

The initial responses illustrate the academics and leaders' understanding of academic freedom anchored on the sub-themes of engagement and expression. As the responses show, academics and academic leaders felt that academic freedom was a two-pronged entitlement covering how the academics expressed themselves and how they engaged in the core functions of the academy. Thus, their understandings were based on expression and engagement. In the following section, I present responses on the indispensability of academic freedom as an aspect of academic life.

5.3.3 Indispensability of Academic Freedom

A portion of those interviewed emphasised the importance of providing academics and students with a free academic environment. They all emphasised the need of preserving academic freedom in universities. Participants were adamant that the ability of academics and students to engage in academic activities without arbitrary constraints was of essential importance to academic freedom. As a result, the opinions focused on the value of academic freedom, which ensures that academics and students are not constrained in their pursuit of knowledge.

Academic freedom's importance in protecting the academic community from overbearing politicians was a recurring issue in the responses. Most scholars felt that academic freedom required the protection of members of the academic community in their quest of truth. As a result, this was a major theme. Some speakers defended academic freedom by pointing out that it protects students and academics from reprisal from higher-ups if their writing or speech causes offence. Therefore, this featured complete study freedom, research topic selection, research methodology, and information access. According to respondents, academics have the most freedom to express themselves when they are not repressed by the university administration, the government, religious or other governmental institutions, or even the demands of certain interest groups.

Direct excerpts from participant responses that bear on these results are provided below:

Participant A 1:

Academic freedom is an essential element in a public institution. The reason being a public institution often is seen as a hub of knowledge for the community. So if a place that is seen as a hub of information for a given community fears to be able to write or speak about certain things because they are going to be tortured or fired and all those things then it defiles the meaning of having such an institution in that society because it will become a passive institution where they cannot transmit desired knowledge for the development of society, and as such we do not need an institution which can be academically oppressed, we want an institution which is going to have academic freedom at all cost. (Interviewed on 1st October 2018).

Participant AL 6:

Academic freedom means that once you are within the university's precinct, it is more like the speaker's corner in Hyde Park, London. Hyde Park is a big park in central London, but there is a speakers' corner where you can say anything against anyone, and nobody will arrest you. Academic freedom is you can research any area and share your findings without fearing that people will misunderstand you. But you will not find this kind of atmosphere at UNZA now. (Interviewed on 17th October 2018).

It is abundantly clear from the verbatims above that the overwhelming consensus was that academic freedom was essentially indispensable in the academy.

5.3.4 Pushing the frontiers of knowledge

Another strong sub-theme that emerged from the participants' perceptions was the role of academic freedom in advancing the frontiers of knowledge. Most participants believed that academic freedom is vital in universities because it fosters new knowledge and ideas. Accordingly, academic freedom was seen as a central player in advancing the frontiers of knowledge through research. They perceived the university as a place for creating new ideas, hopes, knowledge, creativity, and truth buttressed by academic freedom as a *sine qua non* to realise these ideals. These participants (A 2, A 10, and AL 5) commented that academic freedom was a prerequisite for developing critical thinking among academics and students, ultimately advancing knowledge.

The following are the participants' verbatim quotations supporting these findings:

Participant A 6:

Academic freedom is integral to knowledge generation because lecturers are charged with conducting research in the pursuit of knowledge growth. (Interviewed on 5th October 2018).

Participant A 10:

Academic freedom is essential whether we are talking about public universities or private universities because universities are expected to generate knowledge, and the generation of knowledge requires critical thinking. Critical thinking requires academic freedom for lecturers and students to think outside the box. (Interviewed on 10th October 2018).

Participant AL 3:

A university is the birthplace of new ideas. How do we coin new ideas? It is through research, venturing in academic activities within the area of our specialisation without thinking of what people will say. (Interviewed on 4th October 2018).

5.3.5 Fosters Development by Advancing the Public Good

Finally, participants' perspectives on the importance of academic freedom in encouraging growth converged on this concept. Academic freedom was viewed as critical to national development by the majority of respondents due to its role in promoting the common good. According to the participants, academic freedom empowers academics to advise the government on critical issues. Such regulations are motivated by the belief that granting academics the flexibility to test ideas and develop new domains of knowledge is advantageous to society. As a result, academics were regarded as critical to the advancement of civilization. When university researchers are free to share their findings without fear of repercussions, they are better positioned to address societal issues. Participants remarked that academics are considered less as individuals with the freedom to pursue various topics and more as professionals tasked with promoting the country's socioeconomic significance.

The verbatim quotations below provide evidence of the raised perception.

Participant A4:

It is essential. The intellectuals, the academics, are supposed to be the torchbearers. They are the ones who are supposed to educate the country, society, on how things are supposed to be run. They are the torchbearers, especially when it comes to developmental issues. So, if academic freedom is well-practised at public institutions, UNZA it would bring development here at UNZA and the whole country at large.... If there is no freedom at UNZA, where else can you get freedom? You cannot expect laypeople to be issuing solemn pronouncements on things they do not understand. It will be like a blind man leading another blind man. I am sure you know the repercussions. For instance, if you look at education issues, we have a lot of intellectuals, Professors, doctors and so forth in the school of education in the university. These are the people who are supposed to guide the nation on education matters because they have done the research; they have those findings and international exposure. They are more enlightened in terms of educational provision and development. That knowledge is not exploited, and there

is less development. So, all those things, if not taken very seriously, are a challenge. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

Participant A15:

If lecturers must research freely, this will lead to inventions and innovations which are suitable for the country's development. It encourages research and publication on the lecturers' part to delve into innovative activities that bring the development of a country. (Interviewed on 17th October 2018).

Participant AL 2:

I believe that one of the university's mandates is to conduct research and hence should be able to give independent opinions based on empirical data collected. So academic freedom must be exercised. Many discussions on agriculture and education of how people make decisions and policies there. Sometimes I feel there is a need for an academician based on research that has been done to give some direction without fear of reprisal from the government or senior members of the institution that you might be saying something that will cost you your job. If it helps understand a particular issue, I think we need academic freedom to guide society. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

Thus, the four themes discussed above highlight the significant trends in participant understanding of academic freedom. The study participants generally understood academic freedom embracing the expressive and engagement dimensions. This was how academics expressed themselves in teaching, writing and community outreach. The findings also show that many academics believed that academic freedom was indispensable. Others also felt that academic freedom pushes the frontier of knowledge and fosters national development. These responses have partially answered the first sub-question of this research, namely, how do UNZA faculty members and academic leaders understand academic freedom? However, there is a need to supplement these responses with document analysis. Therefore, I now turn to the themes that emerged from my analysis of various documents relating to academic freedom.

5.3.6 Presentation of Data Collected through Document Analysis

I supplemented the data from the semi-structured interviews with an examination of a variety of relevant literature about academic life at the University of Zambia. For example, it has been noted by Vavrus and Bartlett (2009: 16) that textual representations of social and political power are often a reflection of these relationships. Similarly, Luke (1995:44) asserts that texts are placed inside culturally generated social institutions and express social events and cultural practices via language and other signals; texts are situated within culturally produced social institutions. For this project, I examined various UNZA and national documents about life at UNZA in the past and present.

There was no need to seek permission to obtain UNZA and national policy documents as they were readily available in the institution and on the internet. UNZA documents were readily available in the university, and some were available on the internet. The Zambian Constitution and Zambia Higher Education Act were also available. The document analysis guidelines were drawn up and helped me record data relevant to understanding and interpreting academic freedom. Policy documents were analysed on criteria such as the definition of academic freedom, guidelines and practices of academic freedom and attention granted to academics.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, there was a need to employ document analysis in this study to supplement the obtained information from the interviews. Not all documents were directly linked to academic freedom. However, they provided information relevant to academics' academic freedom issues. Document analysis was meant to collect data, particularly for the following objectives of the study:

1. To establish the meaning of academic freedom for academics at the UNZA.
2. To find out why academic freedom matters.
3. To explore the best practices of academic freedom.
4. To explore the challenges faced by UNZA academics in exercising academic freedom.

Table 4: Summary of the Research Objectives and Themes

No.	Research objectives	Themes
1	To investigate academics' and academic leaders' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA	Academic freedom: through the lens of academics and academic leaders
2	To establish how UNZA academics and academic leaders understand academic freedom.	Meaning of academic freedom as perceived by UNZA academics and academic leaders
	To find out how these academics and academic leaders perceive the practice of academic freedom within UNZA.	The perceptions of practice
	To explore how UNZA academics and academic leaders perceive as helping promote and improve academic freedom in the 21st century.	Towards a model for academic freedom

I was required to consult and critically review key policy papers from UNZA and the Zambian government in order to answer the study's research questions due to the special nature of the study's topic and research questions. To better describe the data, the results shown here make use of symbols. Official UNZA and Zambian government policy publications are represented by these symbols. These are Zambia National Policy document: (1) ZNP 1 representing 'Zambian Constitution', (2) ZNP 2 representing 'Zambia Higher Education Act and (3) ZNP 3 representing 'Educating our Future'. UNZA Policy documents: (1) UNZAP 1 representing the 'UNZA Calendar (2015)', (2) UNZAP 2 representing the 'Research Policy and Intellectual Property Rights (2009)', (3) UNZAP 3 representing 'UNZA Strategic Plan (2017) and (4) UNZAP 4 representing 'UNZA Quality

Assurance Framework (2018)'. Table 5 below provides a summary of the documents analysed in this study.

Table 5: Summary of the Documents Analysed

S/N	Document analysed	Source
	<i>Zambia National Policy documents</i>	
1	Zambian Constitution (2016)	Government Printers
2	Zambia Higher Education Act (2013)	Zambia Higher Education Authority
3	Educating our Future (1996)	Ministry of General Education
	<i>UNZA Policy documents</i>	
4	UNZA Calendar (2015)	UNZA
5	Research Policy and Intellectual Property Rights (2009)	UNZA
6	UNZA Strategic Plan (2017)	UNZA
7	UNZA Quality Assurance Framework (2018)	UNZA

UNZA policy documents were readily available in the university, and the Zambia National policies were available on the internet. The policy document analysis was conducted between 1st and 30th March 2019.

The document analysis results are provided in the following section. Findings are divided into broad topics and their constituent subcategories that arose from data analysis.

5.3.6.1 Meaning of Academic Freedom in Policy Documents

The documentary analysis process began with a review of the definition of academic freedom to generate a significantly more nuanced overview of the concept across the numerous sources mentioned above. The paucity of evidence establishing that there was

no definition of academic freedom emerged as the study's most significant finding. No national or UNZA policy documents defined academic freedom (UNZAP 1, UNZAP 2, UNZAP 3, UNZAP 4, ZNP 1, ZNP 2, and ZNP 3). The absence of a specific definition of academic freedom in UNZA policy documents and national policy documents shows that the concept is not widely recognised or supported. It's difficult to make a persuasive case for academic freedom without a clear definition. Despite the lack of a specific definition, almost all the policy documents emphasised the significance of the concepts that comprise academic freedom (UNZAP 1, UNZAP 2, UNZAP 3, UNZAP 4, ZNP 2 and ZNP 3). In this regard, UNZAP 4 (2018:1) and ZNP 2 (2013: 106-107) state the functions of UNZA, which are very similar to the elements or principles of academic freedom:

UNZAP 4:

The university regards teaching, research, and community service as core functions and has developed explicit systems and procedures to ensure and enhance quality in these functions.

ZNP 2:

(1) The functions of a higher education institution are to—

(a) Provide higher education.

(b) Create conditions for learners to acquire qualifications and pursue excellence and promote the full realisation of the potential of learners.

(c) Create conditions for lifelong learning.

(d) Prepare learners and academics and strengthen the effect of academic learning and scientific research to enhance social and economic development.

(e) Conduct research necessary and responsive to national needs.

(f) Provide facilities appropriate for the pursuit of learning and research and for the acquisition of higher education that is responsive to the needs of the public.

(g) Prepare specialist, expert, research, and managerial cadres to carry out intellectual and creative work to meet national needs.

- (h) Provide optimal opportunities for learning and the creation of knowledge; and*
- (i) Contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship in keeping with international standards of academic quality.*

The functions above of higher education clearly border on the principles of academic freedom. Hence in this sense, academic freedom was not explicitly defined.

5.3.6.2 The Status of the Policy Documents on the Guidelines and Practices of Academic Freedom

In the documentary analysis, attention was paid to the status of the policy documents on the guidelines and practices of academic freedom. This exercise aimed to determine how academic freedom was interpreted and applied by members of the academic community at UNZA. The overarching theme emerging from the aspect at hand was that the guidelines and practices of academic freedom were not explicitly outlined because the boundaries and parameters of the concept were not clear-cut. Suffice to say that all UNZA documents and one national policy document (UNZAP 1, UNZAP 2, UNZAP 3, UNZAP 4 and ZNP 2 all analysed on 8 – 9 March 2019) did not devote a section to list or outline the guidelines and practices of academic freedom. Although academic freedom guidelines and practices are not explicitly addressed in ZNP 3 (*Educating our Future*, 1996: 98) and ZNP 1 (the Bill of Rights-Part III of the Constitution of Zambia, 2016 article 21), they dealt with guidelines and practices related to academic freedom. For instance, *educating our Future* provided guidelines and practices on managerial autonomy and the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of Zambia on freedom of expression:

ZNP 3:

The universities operate under legislation that makes them responsible to parliament through the Ministry of Education and confers academic freedom and managerial autonomy. Academically, each university is responsible for determining its instruction programmes at all levels, determining, and regulating the requirements for admission, regulating, and conducting examinations, conferring degrees and other awards, and promoting, coordinating, and controlling the direction of research. In addition, each university engages its staff, manages

its affairs, charges fee and carries out any business or undertaking that seems proper.

ZNP 1:

A person has a right to freedom of expression, which includes –

a) Freedom to hold an opinion.

b) Freedom to receive or impart information or ideas.

c) Freedom of artistic creativity.

d) Academic freedom and

e) Freedom of scientific and technological research, as prescribed.

However, the question can be posed to find out if freedom of expression provides the protection members of the academe need to perform their duties.

5.3.6.3 Attention Granted on Academic Freedom in Policy Documents

Another major theme of the document analysis was the value placed on academic freedom. To evaluate if academic freedom was relevant, the analysis focused on the concept of academic freedom as it was portrayed in policy texts. According to the findings of this study, neither the UNZA policy documents (UNZAP) nor national policy documents (ZNP) accord academic freedom the attention it needed (all analysed on 20 – 24 March 2019). For example, the university's dedication to academic freedom was simply announced as a core value without articulating the processes and criteria by which academics would be protected while they exercised their freedom. Despite this, the documents reflect discussions concerning research, publication, education, consultancy, community service, and dissemination. As a result, the documents contain features that may be related with academic freedom. However, the use of academic freedom as a term is limited. The absence of explicit references to "academic freedom" in official UNZA documents reflects the status or importance of the notion on campus. Even though there is a document named Research Policy and Intellectual Property Rights, there is no academic freedom policy, which is a severe problem at UNZA. As a result, academic

freedom is rarely debated at UNZA. Many laws have been formed on a variety of topics, but none of them have particularly attempted to defend or expand academic freedom. As a result, freedom of thought and expression in the classroom is not identified with any specific institution of higher learning.

The contrary is true of national policy texts, which all mention academic freedom. However, simply the bare minimum of information was provided. Despite the fact that the term was fairly familiar, there was no agreed understanding of its meaning or a set of standard processes for utilising it. When it came to academic freedom, national policies provided nothing new. As a result, there was little information about academic freedom offered. Finally, it is difficult to defend academic freedom when its limitations are unknown.

Having answered the first focal research sub-question in this study, I now turn to the second sub-question, namely, how do these academics perceive the practice of academic freedom within UNZA? In the section that follows, I now turn to the second sub-question, namely, how do these academics perceive the practice of academic freedom within UNZA?

5.4. Perceptions on how Academic Freedom is Practised at UNZA

The second sub-question in this study sought to explore academics and academic leaders' perceptions of how academic freedom is practised within this space. Accordingly, I asked the participants to describe how academic freedom was practised at UNZA. This question aimed to review the activities and behaviours of individual academics and academic leaders regarding the exercise of academic freedom at UNZA. These comprised the role of the academics and academic leaders and the limitations that affect the practice or exercise of academic freedom. The participants diversely described their lived experiences regarding how academic freedom was practised. There were mixed perceptions on how academic freedom was practised. What this meant is that there were both positive and negative perceptions. Those with positive and negative perceptions were almost equal in terms of percentage. This line of inquiry yielded both positive and negative evaluations.

5.4.1 Positive Perceptions: Practised in Teaching and Research

Some participants intimated that academic freedom was being properly practised in teaching and research at UNZA. I learned from the participants that academic freedom at UNZA did not have limitations. They noted that academics practised academic freedom in teaching or communicating ideas or facts without being targeted for repression, imprisonment, or job loss. Some participants further noted that academic freedom was practised by conducting research of their choice and expressing their conclusions through publication without interference from the university's political or ecclesiastical authority or administrative officials.

The verbatim quotes below serve as evidence of the above-raised views:

Participant A 5:

Rather than how it is practised, I will say the opportunities that we have to practice our academic freedom. The most important, which is open and visible, is the lecture time. If one is teaching like in our field, which deals with political and administrative studies, we teach political science and public administration. If it means giving examples that touch on sensitive issues out there, that is the best opportunity for someone to sensitise. I have exercised that on several occasions, but I have not been formally censored, written to, or talked to by supervisors and the immediate supervisors. Nobody has done that to me, but my colleagues have formally told me to tone down on certain issues. One key category is the union leaders, especially the former executive. When we were on contracts, people would say to me that I should think more about my contract and spare my job than holding others accountable and the like. (Interviewed on 4th October 2018).

Participant A 8:

I think with our school, the freedom I would exercise is when I get into the class, I am the authority, and I can say anything that I want, and I will boast. That at least within the confines of the classroom, I can say anything. I can make comments on the political system, but again I will be cautious about the words that I use because in third world countries, it depends on which side one is supporting. If you become

so aggressive towards the government, especially in the previous years when after four years there was a need to renew contracts, there could be some hidden forces that would force management not to renew one's contract. However, because more people now are on permanent terms, they are probably trying to free us in terms of academic freedom maybe we will say much more knowing that nobody will suck us and so on. (Interviewed on 8th October 2018).

Participant AL 8:

I am part of the teaching staff in the school of education at UNZA, and we are free to express our views on different various fields in academic areas. I have written books; I have contributed articles to a magazine. For example, I had an article on the poor quality of education in the country. I freely expressed myself, delved into the topic, and explained why people say there is a poor quality of education in the country. I was free, and nobody questioned me about it. (Interviewed on 19th October 2018).

Participant AL 10:

Members of staff at the university can participate in various research outside and within the country with colleagues. If they had no such freedom, they could not do it, and they would have been locked up. So that exchange of information is there. They can offer their opinions on research freely. (Interviewed on 24th October 2018).

However, some participants provided negative evaluations of the practice of academic freedom at the institution. Their responses are the subject of the section that follows.

5.4.2 Negative Perceptions: Inadequate Knowledge of how Academic Freedom is Practised

Another central theme to emerge was that despite UNZA conferring academic freedom, academics did not know how academic freedom was practised or exercised. This was because UNZA did not have a policy framework to guide academics and academic

leaders on practicing academic freedom. The most likely explanation of the negative perception is that academic freedom is not an essential precondition of UNZA because the academics and academic leaders were not informed about the right. UNZA did not have a policy document on academic freedom. Had it been a sine qua none of the university, they would know how to identify it and what was expected. The section below provides details of the sub-themes.

Many participants reported that academic freedom was not practised due to the university not having a policy framework to guide academics and academic leaders on practising academic freedom. Thus, this can be viewed that the academics and academic leaders at UNZA recognise that a policy framework is required because of the inadequate awareness, knowledge, and expectation of the practice of academic freedom.

The following verbatim quotations provide evidence of the perceptions generated from the participants:

Participant A 1:

I do not have the benchmark I can use to say this is what to do. I do not know how academic freedom is practised because I have not seen any policy that explains academic freedom at the UNZA. That is the first thing. Secondly, we do not have any framework. Academic freedom is by chance to us. Whatever we do, we do it by chance, and we do not know whether we are protected or not on those issues hence the fear to exercise it. (Interviewed on 1st October 2018).

Participant AL 5:

In terms of knowledge, as I indicated earlier, my experience is that most scholars are not sufficiently aware of the freedom they are supposed to enjoy in terms of researching anything they feel persuaded to and disseminating that information to the stakeholders. That is their birthright. However, the extent to which they practice it is shallow. Whether or not that relates to lack of knowledge or other factors, that is another issue. (Interviewed on 10th October 2018).

An essential dimension of the second sub-question was the effect of financial resources on academic freedom. All the participants had a consensus (A 1 – 15 and AL 1 – 15) that financial resources directly affected academic freedom at UNZA. Therefore, the main theme originating from the data analysis was that financial resources directly affected academic freedom at UNZA. However, the direct effect of financial resources on academic freedom at UNZA was either positive or negative. The positive effect of financial resources on academic freedom was prevalent with academics and academic leaders with access to research funds.

On the other hand, the negative effect was prevalent with academics and academic leaders without research funds. Hence, the main theme had two sub-themes: (a) Positive effects of financial resources on academic freedom and (b) Negative effects on academic freedom. The section below provides details of the above-highlighted sub-themes that emerged from the participants' perceptions of financial resources' effect on academic freedom.

When asked to explain how financial resources positively affected academic freedom, participants observed that senior academics had substantial social capital, as such had adequate research funds to exercise their academic freedom without hurdles and their research was mainly large scale and always of good quality. This observation entails that the effective exercise of academic freedom is contingent on adequate financial resources. The participants further noted that most senior academics were privileged to win large research projects because they had built up sufficient academic capital and had a track record of funding to attain more funding. However, they expressed disappointment that the senior academics well connected to the funders closed their social networks.

The following are verbatim quotes from the participants' responses to support the findings above.

Participant A 7:

Senior lecturers are very privileged because they win large research grants due to a good track record of good research. This is because they have the research funds, so definitely, they will conduct quality research. Moreover, they are well

connected in academia, so they tend to win large research funds. I wish our senior colleagues could connect us to the funders, but they seem selfish. (Interviewed on 8th October 2018).

Participant AL 15:

Finances affect academic freedom. Finances facilitate the practice of academic freedom. For example, here at UNZA, we have colleagues, especially those who have been in the system for a long time enjoying academic freedom because they win fully funded research projects. They are well known to government agencies, NGOs, and even UN agencies. (Interviewed on 31st October 2018).

Some participants pointed out that inadequate finances hurt the full enjoyment of academic freedom. They stated that academics could be granted academic freedom on paper, but they cannot exercise that freedom without money. The participants believed that the lack of adequate funding constituted a major impediment to higher education development, which became an indirect threat to academic freedom. Participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the limited funds available for research and conferences, given that the two elements bordered on academic freedom. Participants pointed out that academics conducted poor research due to the university's lack of research funds. Academics used their money to fund their research because government grants or donor funds were not forthcoming. It was revealed that self-funding was spurred by publishing instead of perishing. Hence academics self-funded their research projects to meet up the demand for promotion. However, academics could not undertake meaningful quality research projects due to limited funds.

The following verbatim quotations serve to support the aforementioned perceptions:

Participant A 1:

Management does not fund education at colleges and universities. They do not invest in infrastructure that would allow professors to spend less time in the classroom and more time doing research. Because of the availability of funds, research was once possible. The minister should not have made that statement

because she is aware of the university's lack of funding for research. (Interviewed on 1st October 2018).

Participant A 13:

Finances have a direct effect on academic freedom. It is a challenge to exercise academic freedom without finances because the university does not sponsor research or international conferences. For instance, I have had to use my salary to conduct research or attend international conferences because I perish if I do not conduct research. To get promoted, I need to conduct research, I need to publish, and I also need to attend local and international conferences. (Interviewed on 12th October 2018).

Participant AL 10:

Academic freedom without finances is useless; it is meaningless. One needs finances to facilitate and optimise academic freedom. For instance, here at UNZA, we are given the academic freedom to conduct research, but we cannot research because of a lack of funds. I use my own money to conduct research occasionally, and it is always small scale because I do not have enough money to carry out a large-scale research project. (Interviewed on 24th October 2018).

Participant AL 11:

We need financial support on issues that border directly on academic freedom. The more I can attend conferences, the more I will publish, and the more I will be practising my academic freedom. One can be given academic freedom on paper, but they cannot exercise that freedom if there is no money. (Interviewed on 11th October 2018).

5.4.3 Challenges to Academic Freedom

Faculty and leader perceptions of how academic freedom is practised at UNZA yield several challenges. Many challenges were identified. All participants (A 1 – 15 and AL 1 - 15) believed that academics and academic leaders at UNZA experienced challenges in their endeavour to exercise academic freedom. Therefore, the overarching theme

emerging from the participants' responses regarding the question under consideration was that academics and academic leaders faced many challenges in exercising academic freedom, which caused UNZA not to fully realise its mission of developing knowledge through scholarship and research.

The responses of participants highlighted the following dangers to academic freedom: (a) a lack of financing for salaries, research, and conference attendance; (b) heavy teaching loads; (c) government intervention; and (d) a lack of legislation to guarantee academic freedom. Participants stated that they had complete flexibility to teach and do research at UNZA. Nobody was punished, imprisoned, tortured, or killed for exercising academic freedom. However, due to the challenges to academic freedom posed by the difficulties, UNZA is in a dangerous position. According to those interviewed, the impediments affected the institution's independence, which hampered the quality of research, instruction, and, ultimately, academic freedom through the development of new information and the free expression of opinions. The following section expands on the four key themes that came up during the discussion of academic freedom challenges at UNZA.

5.4.3.1 Inadequate Finances for Salaries, Research and Participation in Conferences

Several respondents expressed worry that UNZA's financial troubles posed a severe danger to higher education quality and, by extension, academic freedom. Participants were disappointed by UNZA's lack of money for salaries, research, and conferences, all of which are critical to producing high-quality intellectual work. According to participants, the government has reduced funding for UNZA due to the country's present financial difficulties. They contended that the institution should be self-sufficient. As a result, schools were undergoing pressure to diversify their financial streams. As such, lecturers had to rely on their pay to fund their numerous research projects, scholarly articles, and international conference attendance. Although they were well paid, their earnings were insufficient to afford substantial research. Thus, they could only perform small-scale research projects, the outcomes of which were occasionally mediocre due to a lack of sufficient financing.

Participants, however, emphasised that it was the role of the university administration and the government to ensure that public universities have appropriate resources for salaries, research, and conferences. Academic freedom was regarded to need not only a lack of limitations but also the availability of the essential means for its actual realisation. These were largely defined as the time, money, and physical resources required to complete proper academic work. Participants agreed that they needed access to a wide range of resources to push the bounds of human knowledge forward.

The following extracts substantiate the allegations made regarding the participants' opinions made above:

Participant A 1:

Management does not fund research at colleges and universities. They don't even build the infrastructure needed to free up academics' prep time so they can conduct more research. Academics could conduct research in the past because there were finances available for it. Given her knowledge that the university lacks funds for scientific research, the minister made a terrible move by making such a public statement. (Interviewed on 1st October 2018).

Participant AL 2:

There has not been much financial assistance for academic freedom. When I mentioned conferences, I made a fleeting allusion to this. People have indicated an interest in presenting their research at academic gatherings such as conferences and international symposia on occasion. They would be told that there would be no finances for their plane ticket, allowance, or anything else. Many academics increasingly pay for their own transportation to conferences and other professional gatherings. They spend a lot of money to publish books, magazines, and other types of print media. As a result, I feel less free to express myself and pursue my own research interests within my chosen field of study, which is a direct attack on academic freedom. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

Participant AL 14:

Despite the absence of interference by the government at UNZA, I feel the presence of financial resources is vital because, without finances, one cannot practice academic freedom. Lecturers need finances to exercise academic freedom. For example, as a lecturer at UNZA, I have the freedom to conduct research, but I cannot conduct research I cannot conduct research d, so my academic freedom is of no use. (Interviewed on 30th October 2018).

5.4.3.2 Heavy Teaching Requirements

Participants (A2, A7, A15, AL1, AL3, AL4, and AL10) claimed that heavy teaching requirements had substituted the responsibility to develop knowledge and contributed to the watering down of academic freedom by introducing extra barriers to its practise. They also stated that, due to the heavy teaching loads, UNZA is like a secondary school, complete with the regular teaching, grading, and paperwork. That made finding time to do things like knowledge discovery and critical thinking challenging. As a result, universities began to drift away from their original, lofty goal of furthering knowledge. As a result of the concentration on teaching, there has been a decrease in time spent on research and writing.

Below are some quotes that address the issue.

Participant A 2:

There are much more students than lecturers. There are many students here. As an example, I had 350 students in my classes last year, which was way too many. But how does this affect academic freedom? There is far too much work stacking up, and there are far too many students waiting for consultations to allow anyone to go do their own research. This places a significant strain on each lecturer. (Interviewed on 2nd October 2018).

Participant AL 3:

At UNZA, we spend more time teaching than thinking about our area of specialisation, and thinking requires researching, publishing, and attending conferences. For instance, I

am teaching four undergraduate courses and I am teaching four post-graduate classes. So, we have become a big secondary school where our core business is just teaching. If we have no time to attend conferences and write, our academic freedom will be choked. This is because I cannot publish an article that I express freely or share my knowledge. This is because we have so many students now with very few lectures, which takes much of our time. (Interviewed on 4th October 2018).

Participant AL 4:

We have more students than academic members of staff, which means that much time is spent on just marking teaching because we must divide classes into two or three streams so that we can meet them because the venues are far too small, and so that eats into our time to do research. (Interviewed on 9th October 2018).

5.4.3.3 Government Interference

Another issue that emerged as a challenge to academic freedom was government interference. The greatest threat to academic freedom at UNZA, according to research subjects A5, A11, AL6, AL9, and AL12, is government interference. Because of its financial clout, the government wielded enormous power and ultimate control over the school. The fact that UNZA got so much of its funding from the government was considered to make it an accessible target for added involvement. The government interfered with the university's autonomy in defining academic policies. This type of censorship violates the right to express oneself freely. Because the government suppressed academic freedom by requiring conformity in teaching, research, and publication, the university's mission was jeopardised.

The following quotations give evidence to back up the claims made:

Participant A 5:

This example is a recent issue. Last year, the first years were supposed to come around January. The government decided that the university should not re-open, but it should postpone to the next month. So, we have the University senate with session days and thought they would move along those lines, but the government stopped them. The same has happened this year, the first years were supposed

to come on 5th November, but we have been told that the opening has been postponed by two months and it is because maybe the government is not ready in terms of the loan system and the like. So, that is one element of interference. If there were no interference, the university would just say this is our schedule, and the government knowing that it has the responsibility to finance the university knows the budget because there is nothing secret. All the finances are accountable to parliament. There is the auditor general's report. There are systems to control wrongdoing. Moreover, I hear now that the government has stopped the intention to raise fees for accommodation proposed by the university. (Interviewed on 4th October 2018).

Participant A 11:

The University is fully controlled by the government partly because it is not autonomous in terms of funding. However, we hear in the Acts that the university shall operate autonomously, but it does not. I will explain that; there are times when this university has made certain decisions in trying to get funding from their students, the payments, but the government has reversed that, so that does not show that the University is autonomous. For example, we are told that you cannot dismiss students from writing exams. They must write exams and pay later. Even the University management find themselves in this predicament we are talking about. Even if they say all students must pay by this date, it will not happen because they will complain at government offices, and the government will tell us to reverse the decision. Faculty who wishes to strike are sometimes cautioned or even fired if they do so. So, where is the intellectual freedom we were promised? There has been a failure to meet contractual obligations to faculty members. Once upon a time, lecturers who wanted to strike were threatened with dismissal, so the public remained silent. (Interviewed on 11th October 2018).

Participant AL 9:

Academics are not allowed to speak freely in most universities. One lives in continual fear of becoming the next Mr Munkombwe, who was saved by management. The current political climate makes most lecturers feel endangered.

They are afraid of being dismissed. I am aware of many other victims. There was a president of the UNZALARU (University of Zambia Lecturers and Researchers' Union) who was not hesitant to express his displeasure at the time. With his job on the line, he stood up in a variety of ways. When his contract expired, the department he worked at was desperate for a lecturer but had none. They lobbied for him to have his contract extended. They informed the school of the situation and the necessity for the man's knowledge, and the institution decided to hire him. The school equally strongly recommended that the man be needed because there was a shortage in the department. Unfortunately, when the issue went to the university council, they indicated that they did not need the man's services, so his contract was not renewed. It is not only the university that lost a trained human resource, but even the union lost leadership because the union needed another person to take over as UNZALARU president. (Interviewed on 23rd October 2018).

5.4.3.4 Lack of Orientation to New Academics on Academic Freedom

A key concern was identified as a lack of orientation for new academics, adding to the expanding list of perceived challenges to academic freedom. Participants (A6, A8, AL 7, AL 8, and AL 11) emphasised academic freedom's relevance to new academics, arguing that orientation would educate them to academic ethos such as academic freedom. Despite academic freedom being a major priority at UNZA, most academics, particularly younger academics, lacked proper education on academic freedom principles and, as a result, did not fully enjoy the safeguards that their standing as UNZA academics gave them. Educating new academics about their rights and the value of academic freedom may inspire them to advocate for such rights. The quotes below summarise the prevailing consensus:

Participant AL 8:

We are concerned that UNZA does not do a good enough job of orienting new lecturers and students. As you can see, each organisation has its own distinct culture. That is why it is critical to have a talk with newly hired young lecturers about academic freedom and other things like these. That is not something I believe they do; it is one of the university's many problems. According to what I've

heard, senior academics used to frequently attend lectures given by their junior colleagues. As a coach, not a snoop. That's a tricky element now, and even the academy isn't encouraging it now. (Interviewed on 8th October 2018).

Participant A 5:

Academic freedom is one of the societal obligations of academics, yet few are aware of it. Scholars require an introduction to the profession's standards and obligations. I hear most of them saying that if they get a salary at the end of the month, it is okay because that is important to them. When a social or academic issue comes up, you will hear them talk. Do they say what value it will add to my income at the day? So, we are academicians interested in bread-and-butter issues. An honest academician should say that being a lecturer, a teacher is a calling. It is a noble cause. If you want to make money: Become an entrepreneur. Go out there, start up something; nobody will question that. Suppose one wants to become a lecturer or a researcher. In that case, they should utilise their academic freedom and become the mouthpiece of the masses out there and not an enemy of the people and a friend of the exploiters that is my opinion. (Interviewed on 4th October 2018).

3.4.3.5 Absence of Clear Legal Protection for Academic Freedom of Academics

Academic freedom was not effectively guaranteed by law (A 9, A 12, AL 10, AL 12 and AL 13). Because of the preceding remark, participants said it was critical for the law to ensure academic freedom clearly. They argued that because academic freedom was not guaranteed by law, it may be jeopardized by various behaviours and ideas. As a result, academic freedom should be constitutionally protected to ensure that all scholars can do their research without interference from the government or the repercussions of their own biases or practises. Legal protection would uphold or improve academic freedom, while violations by various agencies would be diminished. Participants stressed the importance of finding a solution to the issue of academic freedom that goes beyond UNZA and into higher education policies, such as enshrining academic freedom in constitutional or legislative frameworks. These impressions are supported by the following quotations:

Participant AL 12:

A lecturer's freedom of expression in the classroom is not guaranteed by the constitution or the law. As a result, there is now a general atmosphere of terror. Most lecturers lack confidence in their ability to defend their academic freedom, hence they rarely do so. The management of the university is not free to operate it as a learning institution, either. Therefore, it must constantly consider the desires of political leaders. (Interviewed on 26th October 2018).

Participant A 9:

Members of the university community require assurance that they will be protected legally. They should be free of political constraints in order to advance knowledge and serve the community. Furthermore, this can only be accomplished if a policy that protects academic freedom is in place. That is a significant factor. If this is accomplished, a lecturer in this community will be able to speak to the general public with an open mind, and only then can we debate academic freedom. However, at the moment, that is simply not doable. (Interviewed on 9th October 2018).

It is clear from this section that there were mixed perceptions on the practice of academic freedom at UNZA. Thus, the second sub-question in this study has been answered by the evidence provided in the preceding paragraphs. In the following section, I now turn to the final research question: What do academics perceive as helping promote and improve academic freedom in the 21st century?

5.5 Perceptions on Promoting and Improving Academic Freedom

Formulating a relevant academic freedom strategy is imperative for the effective and practical realisation of academic freedom as the basis of higher education quality worldwide. Therefore, the participants were asked during the interviews to highlight different strategies that could be put in place to promote academic freedom at UNZA. As a result, all participants (A 1 – 15 and AL 1 – 15) proposed strategies to protect and maintain the academic freedom of academics. In addition, suggested strategies were directed to overcome challenges to academic freedom as perceived by participants.

Most participants desired that management should formulate a strategy to guarantee academic freedom as a right of academics to teach, research, write and speak the truth in their areas of expertise without fear of retribution by institutional and political authorities. The absence of strategies to promote academic freedom would threaten the very essence of the university's purpose. They added that academic freedom was desirable in higher learning institutions because it enabled the universities to make internal decisions independent of government control or control by any outside agent. The section below provides details of the above highlighted main themes that emerged from the participants' suggested strategies for promoting academic freedom at UNZA.

5.5.1 Developing a Policy Framework

Concerning the suggested strategies that would promote academic freedom at UNZA, developing a university and national policy framework emerged as key strategies. It was considered a *sine qua non* for protecting, facilitating, strengthening, and optimising academic freedom. Most participants noted that UNZA or the government had not yet developed a policy framework to safeguard academic freedom. They believed that developing an academic freedom policy framework for academics was indispensable for spelling out the means and guidelines by which the university would protect academics as they exercised their academic freedom. They further suggested that the university should formulate an internal policy framework for safeguarding academic freedom as a government university. They opined that a policy would enable academics to freely engage in controversial and robust debates without being subject to undue restrictions or sanctions.

The following verbatim quotations epitomise the participants' views:

Participant AL 2:

The University and government should develop policy guidelines for academic freedom at the university and national levels. These policies must be shared widely in the mail and on engagement platforms where the administrators and managers have a one-on-one engagement with academics. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

Participant A 2:

Academic freedom is just like freedom of speech. It is a fundamental tenet to teaching and learning to develop intellect and leadership and make our students have an open mind. An oppressed mind cannot be innovative or creative. The only best way we can do that is to create policy guidelines. I have talked about it. It should be a subject of concern in that no one should be intimidated and linked to law issues. Some of us do not know the law, so we fear getting into that thinking. We might not have a legal defence. Then we can only talk about academic freedom in totality if we protect staff, and once we do that, we can see through ourselves what the staff can bring out, which will help improve our university. We will reap positive results. We also need to expose ourselves to how other institutions express academic freedom and see if they have policy guidelines we can learn from and how they do it. (Interviewed on 2nd October 2018).

Participant AL 5:

There is a need for a policy framework to guide and protect the exercise of academic freedom because the university will spell out the protection of academic freedom. So that if I carry out controversial research and present the findings as a scholar, the university should stand by me. (Interviewed on 10th October 2018).

5.5.2 Providing Financial Support on Issues that Border on Academic Freedom

Another key theme that emerged regarding strategies promoting academic freedom was providing financial support by university management and government on issues that border on academic freedom. Many participants (A1, A 2, A 3, A 4, A 5, A 10, A 11, A 14, A15, AL 1, AL 2, AL 3, AL 4, AL 7, AL 8, AL 9, AL 10, AL 11, AL 13, and AL 14) stressed that provision of funds would help facilitate the realisation of academic freedom. However, some participants (AL 7 and AL 11) were of a different view regarding the issue of finances. They argued that solely depending on government funding was not the solution for realising academic freedom but self-sustaining as a university. They added that the university could be innovative and think of generating funds to facilitate the realisation of academic freedom. Finally, they argued that dependence on government funds

threatened their academic freedom. Below are examples of the quotations I gathered to support the raised views:

Participant A 3:

I think we need financial support on issues that border directly on academic freedom. For example, we need to have resources set aside for research and publications because that will encourage more and more of our students and lecturers to research and from there, they can speak their minds. In addition, the more I can attend conferences, the more I will be able to publish and the more I will be practising my academic freedom. One can be given academic freedom on paper, but they cannot exercise that freedom if there is no money. (Interviewed on 2nd October 2018).

Participant AL 4:

I may have so many but let me pull out two or so. The first is financial resource mobilisation and allocation to research, publication, and conferences. We need to see a lot of resources getting into research to enhance our capacity to inquire. That way, we will come out with ideas to debate. (Interviewed on 9th October 2018).

Participant AL 7:

University management should have money to run the institution. It is high time the Zambian government allow public universities to make their own money. This will make universities stop relying on them, and hence government will not interfere with how they want to run the institutions. They are the ones who bring problems, and our hands are tied. Public universities should make their own money to avoid interference. (Interviewed on 18th October 2018).

Participant AL 11:

UNZA needs to become more innovative by raising its own resources. If it can raise more of its own resources, then academic freedom will be accomplished. This can be done by broadening sources of research funding to not depend on funders who

have a vested interest in some results. I think that would be one way of strengthening academic freedom. (Interviewed on 25th October 2018).

5.5.3 Raising Awareness of Academic Freedom

Another overarching finding relating to the strategies promoting academic freedom was raising awareness of academic freedom among the academic community. Participants (A 2, A 5, A 7, AL 5, and AL 13) reported that there was a need for raising awareness among academics at UNZA about the parameters within which academic freedom operates, given that only a fortunate few academics were privy to this right which was a prerequisite for the excellent health of the university. Increasing awareness among academics about their rights and academic freedom could serve to engage academics in working to defend or bolster their freedoms. Hence, participants argued that by raising awareness of academic freedom, those within the academic community will be motivated and better positioned to defend it. Participants placed the responsibility for sensitising academics on departments and schools.

Verbatim extracts include:

Participant A 7:

I think there is a need to develop strategies to raise academic freedom awareness. We should have talks regarding academic freedom. What is academic freedom? What is involved? What can you do? What rights does it give you? Are there international organisations that talk about this? Is academic freedom a human right? We just need to have discussions on it, but schools and departments should be proactive. I am from the library studies department, and the library has academic freedom issues, and I have never heard the library talk about it. Even at the departmental level, I discussed this with one of the senior lecturers. I got to his office, and we discussed things, but they will not come up in meetings. So, I suggest we have discussions where people make presentations and hopefully you are going to do that. There should be discussions on it just to raise awareness. (Interviewed on 8th October 2018).

Participant AL 5:

People should be sensitised that it is their right to research and disseminate their findings when teaching and give appropriate examples if they are truthful. Lecturers and students should be encouraged to do that. The university must educate its workers on their rights. Moreover, if academic freedom is one of its members' rights, they should be told about it. (Interviewed on 10th October 2018).

5.5.4 Dissemination of Research Findings to the Broader Public

Another emerging theme among the strategies that promote academic freedom is UNZA encouraging the dissemination of research findings. Participants (A 2, A 4, A 5, A 13, AL 4, AL 8, and AL 9) stressed the need to disseminate research findings because academics' efforts are wasted without effective and ongoing dissemination of research findings. Furthermore, to serve the public good, participants stated that schools or faculties in the university could use their academic expertise to establish linkages, networks, and partnerships with relevant ministries beyond the university's walls. For instance, the school of education and the Ministry of General Education (MGE) or the school of agriculture with the Ministry of Agriculture can establish a synergy by working hand in hand to formulate policies for national development. Moreover, the research findings gathered by different schools can be disseminated to respective ministries to influence the nation's policies.

Furthermore, adequate dissemination calls for interaction and cooperation between universities and government ministries because ministries serve the public. Hence universities need to be proactive in disseminating research findings through media, conferences, meetings, and public debates.

The verbatim quotes below provide evidence of the above-raised strategy:

Participant A 4:

There must be serious dissemination of research findings at different forums. Universities are torchbearers of the nation. Hence their research findings should influence policy in different ministries. For example, our school, school of education can work together with the Ministry of Education to formulate policies based on

research findings. The information shared will benefit the country extensively. (Interviewed on 3rd October 2018).

Participant AL 8:

The University should encourage lecturers to disseminate their findings at the university, nation, and international levels. I would want severe dissemination of research findings to influence national policy regarding economic sectors. Right now, I think we are doing very little. Maybe that is why people say we are not researching because our research findings do not influence policy. There is a gap between policy and the research we are doing. So, we need to improve on that. Maybe we can bring in our colleagues from various schools in the university. If you look at our colleagues worldwide, they are involved in collaborative research. For instance, at the School of Education, our primary client is the Ministry of Education, and they have the directorate of planning and information. Why don't we work with them on specific projects regarding issues challenges in the educational sector? (Interviewed on 19th October 2018).

5.6 Summary

Chapter five presented research findings which pertained to participants' perceptions of academic freedom. Interview and document analysis data were categorised into main themes and sub-themes. The data presentation provided a thorough description of academic freedom and how participants experienced academic freedom in their own lives at UNZA. The next chapter discusses the findings presented in the previous chapter by examining them with the literature in Chapter 2 and two theories in chapter three.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research findings derived from participants' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA. I supplemented these findings with documentary analysis of UNZA and Zambia's National policies. In presenting the findings, the previous chapter was structured with a focus on the research questions. The current chapter presents the discussion of research findings. The social capital and resource dependence perspectives provide the theoretical anchorage for the findings. These theoretical perspectives frame the findings. The theoretical framework of this study is that social capital and resource dependence can both promote and inhibit the enjoyment of academic freedom. Therefore, the findings of this study test these theoretical propositions, and a tentative interpretation is given.

The findings are also discussed based on the literature review. The goal is to demonstrate the results' applicability and significance (Morse & Field, 1996:106). A review of the available literature is required to:

.. The literature is reviewed to:

- Construct a body of knowledge on which to base research results,
- Verify whether the themes identified in this study have hitherto been documented. Therefore, establishing the credibility of the findings of the study,
- Bring to attention the comprehensive agreements and disagreements among past researchers on the identified themes, and
- Provide a contextualised explanation of the study's place within the greater scientific literature.

The theoretical framework of the study will structure the discussion of the findings. As discussed in chapter three, this study is premised on the theoretical assertions of the social capital and resource dependence theories.

6.2 Perceptions of Academic Freedom: A Synthesis

The purpose of the study was to comprehend how academics and academic leaders perceived academic freedom at UNZA. The participants provided detailed perceptions about academic freedom. This research revealed that academics and academic leaders perceived academic freedom as critical for achieving the university's mission. The study also showed that the academics and academic leaders perceived UNZA as not having experienced serious violations or severe curtailment of their academic freedom. However, it was implicitly controlled and restricted by the university management and government. The following section discusses the main emerging themes.

The findings revealed that all academics and academic leaders (A 1 – 15 and AL 1 – 15) perceived academic freedom as a requisite for academics to accomplish the university's mission. The consensus among the participants was that academic freedom is a fundamental value for academics that facilitates the growth and spread of knowledge. They argued that academics should have the freedom to teach according to their consciences, beliefs, research and openly share divergent views without any internal or external interference. They noted that the university and the government should continuously raise awareness, uphold academic freedom, and ensure that it exists for everyone.

The findings above are consistent with Cannizzo's (2015: n.d) argument that academic freedom is a value that has gained a high degree of normative credibility across the academic profession. Academic freedom is essential for executing the university's purpose (Karki, 2015: 28). Thus, the university's success depends on a stable atmosphere of academic freedom. Academic freedom aims to maintain its value by protecting knowledge and the people who produce that knowledge, even if they are both controversial and contentious (Locher, 2013: 13).

The findings of this study are consistent with those of a study by Kimoga et al. on "the perceptions of higher education academic staff on the freedom to decide what to teach" (2017: 119), which found that academic freedom is vital because it allows academics to teach on topics that fall within their areas of expertise and to conduct research in topics that pique their interest. Academics and researchers are better equipped to stick to their

own educational beliefs and scholarly obligations when they are given the flexibility to do so. Therefore, academic freedom refers to the protection of faculty members from institutional and governmental constraints on their rights to engage in teaching, research, publication, and expression. The pursuit of truth and the fulfilment of a university's function in academia and society require that institutions of higher education be granted full academic freedom for their faculty. There is no possible benefit to universities that restrict academic freedom.

Another finding on how UNZA academics and academic leaders perceive, and experience academic freedom is that UNZA academics do not fully enjoy academic freedom. All participants (A 1 – 15 and AL 1 – 15) revealed that their academic freedom was being violated in one way or another. They perceived that management and government indirectly controlled and limited academic freedom at UNZA through heavy academic duties for academics, financial constraints, lack of academic freedom policy, and freedom of expression. Because of these factors, academics at UNZA were unable to fully exercise their right to academic freedom. In the eyes of the academics, UNZA has transformed into a secondary institution where instruction and grading predominate. Some participants intimated that the freedom of expression carried a high degree of risk. As such, most academics did not criticize government or government policies. They noted an atmosphere of fear or paranoia because academic freedom carried repercussions as those in power did not want to be criticized.

The perceptions of academics and academic leaders underscore that academic freedom was implicitly or subtly threatened because there were no gross violations of academics' rights at UNZA. Reliance on government funding and lack of policy has led to the suffocation of the vital voice of academics at UNZA. It is no surprise that freedom of expression does not exist, especially with the scrutiny of the government of the day. This *status quo* has inhibited or deterred open criticism or critical scrutiny of government agencies and policies. Nevertheless, as stated earlier, UNZA has not experienced any gross violation or severe repression of academics' right to freedom. The participants did not report any academic member of staff losing their employment, being tortured, murdered, or reprimanded for publishing their research findings.

This clearly shows that UNZA academics did not truly exercise their academic freedom because of an atmosphere of fear or paranoia since they were dependent on government funding, and there was no policy. Had they exercised their academic freedom fully, such as reporting or publishing controversial findings or saying something that contradicts institutional or government policies, they would have suffered gross violations. This accords with the findings by Owusu-Ansah that while academic freedom is threatened by lack of financial resources, over-reliance on government funding, red tape, and intense administrative duties, academics in public universities can still exercise their freedom in a democratic nation. Zambia is a democratic nation, which could also justify why UNZA has not had gross violations or limitations on academic freedom.

However, the finding of this study was different from that of the AAF (2016: 2), which reported that "countries such as China, Russia, and many Arab nations are known to expel, imprison, and otherwise punish students and scholars simply for the nature of their research or their political views. Some deny education to whole classes of citizens, such as women". For example, China is commonly known for its apparent lack of reverence for academic freedom. It executes government censorship, imprisons controversial academics, and sets severe restrictions on discussing and publishing study findings (ibid). These findings contradict this study since no gross violations of academic freedom were identified in the current study.

In this instance, the most appropriate theory to interpret results relevant to the main research question is the social capital theory. It can be confirmed that participants perceive academic freedom as a requirement to fulfill the university's goal. However, on the other hand, they experience implicit infringements of academic freedom leading to a failure to enjoy it, attributed to social networks that produce positive and negative results. This aligns with Field's (2008:3) argument that social networks can produce either positive or negative social capital.

Thus, participants' perceptions that academic freedom is essential for carrying out the university's mission stems from social network connections or relationships which eventually lead to the development of positive social capital that strengthens academic freedom. On the other hand, participants experiencing implicit violations of academic

freedom at UNZA, leading to a failure to enjoy it, derive from social network connections or relationships that eventually culminate in negative social capital that weakens academic freedom.

6.3 Understandings of Academic freedom: Implications

The participants were expected to answer the question, *"how do academics and academic leaders understand academic freedom?"* This question was posed to academics and academic leaders in order to gain a sense of their knowledge of the concept and their own personal conceptions of academic freedom, which would then cast light on their behaviour in relation to the issue. Academics and academic leaders (A 1-15 and AL 1-15) were discovered to have opposing views on academic freedom. While participants' ideas on academic freedom differed, they all demonstrated a thorough understanding of the concept overall. Academics' and academic leaders' differing perspectives on academic freedom laid the groundwork for recognising the concept's continuous pervasiveness.

Overall, these findings are consistent with those of Altbach (2001: 205), Ansah (2015:174), Degefa (2015:6-7), and Karki (2015:1), who all agree that the idea of academic freedom is broadly perceived and, as a result, lacks a definite definition. Similarly, the American Association of University Professors (2011) thinks that there was never a single, unambiguous definition of academic freedom because the term evolved in a variety of ways in reaction to evolving historical settings and power relations.

It is critical to note that this study presented academic freedom as both a positive and a negative right. The most striking finding to emerge from the data is that both the positive and negative rights were encapsulated in all participants' definitions. For the participants, academic freedom was defined as both the freedom "to" and the freedom "from" interference, criticism, or other barriers to pursuing in academic activities. All participants agreed that academic freedom meant having the freedom to pursue legitimate academic pursuits free from unjustified interference or limitations. This definition comprises both positive and negative rights. The finding is broadly consistent with the major trends on how academic freedom is perceived as both a positive and a negative right. A°kerlind and Kayrooz's study report that the concept of academic freedom is "freedom *from*, i.e.,

freedom from interference. Others see academic freedom as being more about freedom *to*, i.e., freedom to engage in appropriate academic activities. This represents a shift in the interpretation of academic freedom from being a negative right to a positive right of academics" (2003:328). The two broad definitions that emerged from participants have in common is an emphasis on the right of the academics to choose and engage in academic activities without interference or fear of reprisals.

In the following subsections, the two key findings of the first research question will be discussed: Academic freedom as the freedom of expression and academic freedom as the freedom of academics or students to engage in a wide range of academic activities. In addition, document analysis findings and the theoretical framework will also be discussed.

Academic freedom as the freedom of expression emerged as one of the overarching findings on the definition of academic freedom. I learned from academics and academic leaders that academic freedom was understood and defined as the freedom of academics and students to express themselves in their views and ideas without undue or unreasonable interference or restrictions from academic superiors or authorities outside the university.

This finding ties nicely with Al-Zyoud's (2001: 51) and Karki's (2015: 73) studies, in which academic freedom is defined as the fundamental right to express oneself. This perception of academic freedom is like the general theory of academic freedom, as presented by Searle (1972: 175). This theory underscores that academics and students have the same free expression rights in a free society. Another similar perception of academic freedom is found in O'Neil's (2004:40) article, which argues that norms of academic freedom are expected to express ideas or beliefs both in teaching students and conducting research irrespective of how insensitive the subject matter might appear. Therefore, in this regard, scholars are obligated to be correct and should demonstrate restraint, display reverence for the views of others, and make every attempt to demonstrate that they do not speak for the university.

It is worth noting that all the participants in this category defined academic freedom solely in terms of individual rights. The definitions were not all-encompassing of the scope of

academic freedom. Hence, this implies that the definitions were specific. However, this does not signify that the participants in this category did not fully understand the concept. As Spannagel (2019:2) pointed out, "while there is no clear definition, several elements are generally accepted as being of or closely linked to academic freedom." Considering the foregoing, the elements or individual rights in this theme are regarded as accepted independent sub-categories of the definition of academic freedom. The elements or individual rights contribute to the scope or dimension of academic freedom.

The participants' comments revealed that academic freedom was tied to the freedom of expression in views and ideas within or outside the university to pursue writing, teaching, scholarly debate, and research excellence. Hence academic freedom meant the freedom of expression in teaching, freedom of expression in research, freedom of expression in writing, and freedom of expression in public debate. This finding is confirmed in the reviewed literature in Chapter Two (2) as per Al-Zyoud (2001: 51) that academic freedom is "the freedom of academics and students to express their views and ideas in academic activities regardless of any factor." Furthermore, AAUPs explain in the 1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure that academic freedom is the freedom of lecturing within the university or college, freedom of inquiry and research, and freedom of public debate (p. 292). However, the AAUP's definition excludes the freedom of writing and academic freedom of students (*Lernfreiheit*), which the participants included in their definition of the notion [academic freedom].

The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics (1990) is the most applicable definition as it encapsulates all the above individual rights of academic freedom. The Dar es Salaam Declaration on Academic Freedom and Social Responsibility of Academics (1990: n.p.) defines 'academic freedom' as "the freedom of members of the academic community, individually or collectively, in the pursuit, development, and transmission of knowledge, through research, study, discussion, documentation, production, creation, teaching, lecturing, and writing." This definition is a broad representation of the four definitions mentioned above. Worth noting, public debate in this definition falls under discussion.

This study presents a unique picture of the participants' understandings of academic freedom. The emphasis across all the themes which emerged in this study was that the definition of academic freedom was not all-encompassing of the elements of academic freedom. This finding is similar to Vrieling *et al.* (2011:117) study, where the academics' interpretations presented academic freedom as a right comprising a plethora of intellectual rights.

However, the finding is different from Akerlind and Kayrooz's (2003:327) study, which points out that aspects of academic freedom are not entirely individual but also have a collective or institutional dimension that is commonly referred to as 'institutional autonomy.' Therefore Vrieling *et al.*'s definition in their study entails that departments, schools, and universities at large have the right to safeguard and uphold the principles of academic freedom in the practice of their internal and external affairs.

Another finding of the definition of academic freedom is academic freedom as the freedom to engage in academic activities. Academic activities comprise a set of rights. Hence academic freedom was described in terms of a set of rights. Seven academic leaders and three academics (AL 1, AL 4, AL 5, AL 6, AL9, AL10, AL 12, and A6, A7, A 11) provided a comprehensive and holistic definition of academic freedom. These participants understood and comprehensively defined academic freedom as the freedom of academics and students to engage in a wide range of academic activities involved in knowledge generation without undue or unreasonable interference. This definition is all-encompassing of the scope of academic freedom. Some participants (A 6, A 7, AL 1, AL 5, AL 9, and AL 10) in this category went further and illustrated academic freedom as applying to one or more of the following areas of activity, writing, research, teaching, community service, freedom of speech and expression.

The definition of academic freedom presented in this category is similar to the idea of what other researchers such as Karki (2015: 23) and Moshman (2017: 1) presented in their studies as academic freedom. That academic freedom is the freedom to engage in academic activities. Moshman's (2017:5) study established those academic activities have many facets and can be described in various ways, but there is no doubt that they encompass teaching, learning, and research. Moshman's view of academic freedom

activities confirms that the participants in this category knew academic freedom because their explanation of the concept touched on the three activities he mentioned.

The findings of document analysis on the definition of academic freedom suggested that both UNZA policy documents and Zambian national policy documents (UNZAP 1, UNZAP 2, UNZAP 3, UNZAP 4, ZNP 1, ZNP 2, and ZNP 3) did not define academic freedom. The findings indicate that the concept remains undefined, at best vague, in the policy documents examined. In certain documents, academic freedom is not addressed, leaving academics only indirectly protected by the human rights all citizens in a democratic society are entitled to, such as the freedom of expression and association.

The most likely explanation of the negative result is that at UNZA and Zambia in general, the notion of academic freedom was insufficiently conceived and vague based on a persuasive defence. An important implication of this finding is that it is impossible to argue firmly for its value (Vrieling, 2011: 118). Therefore, academic freedom must be clearly defined to protect it.

In this instance, a theory that is most suitable to explain findings linked to the first sub-research question is the social capital theory. The connection between the first sub-research question and the social capital theory is that social relations between academics and external environments facilitate the enjoyment of academic freedom. The reason is that social capital theory regarding academic freedom is indispensable to academics to gain access to resources, consultancy services, and research projects from the external environment.

Chapter Five revealed that academics with sufficient social capital exercised their academic freedom at UNZA without hurdles. Conversely, academics with less or no social networks with the external environments experienced challenges when exercising academic freedom because they lacked resources given by the external environment to promote academic freedom. These two sets of academics (those with sufficient social capital and those without) would perceive academic freedom differently from a social capital perspective. To support this argument, Field (2008:3) noted that social network ties or connections could cause negative and positive social capital contingent on the prevailing social circumstances. All the divergent definitions that emerged in data analysis

generated both positive and negative social capital, which contributed to the divergent views of the definition of academic freedom.

Different academics defined academic freedom as contingent on social ties with the external environment. Therefore, the definition of academics was perceived as a positive and negative right. A°kerlind reached a similar conclusion, and Kayrooz's (2003:328) and Nordal's (2016: 4) studies that definitions of academic freedom focus on "academic freedom as a negative right, the freedom from or right to non-interference, citing, for instance, the freedom to research and discuss either in published works or in the classroom without facing interference from authorities inside or outside the university." The study further concluded that there are other definitions that consider "academic freedom as a positive right, or the freedom to, indicating the university's duty to provide sufficient support for academic activities that facilitate academic freedom, such as funding" (Nordal, 2016: 5). The divergent interpretations of academic freedom focused on a positive or negative right. In the following section, I discuss responses on the indispensability of academic freedom as an aspect of academic life.

6.3.1 Perceptions of Why Academic Freedom Matters

Academic freedom matters because it enables academics to pursue the truth. To pursue the truth, academics must be free from any threat. Furthermore, academic freedom is the idea that knowledge is developed via unrestricted investigation, enabling academics to pursue knowledge without fear of reprisal. Therefore, considering the significance of academic freedom, helped highlight the centrality of academic freedom at UNZA.

The findings reveal that academic freedom was essential in higher education institutions. In addition, the findings revealed that the critical importance of academic freedom was the freedom of academics and students to engage in academic pursuits without unreasonable constraints. Finally, the findings revealed that academic freedom matters for several reasons.

First, the findings show that academic freedom matters because it safeguards or protects academic community members against politicians, the board of trustees, and management who are antagonistic to the vital role of the university. Participants pointed

out that academic freedom would lose relevance if academic community members were not protected when pursuing truth or knowledge. Finally, they commented that academic freedom was indispensable because it ensured the protection of academics and students within and outside the academy when their writing or speech offended those with power over them.

Academic freedom, as discussed in Chapter 2, helps to protect knowledge and the academics who develop it from harm, even if the knowledge is unpopular or contentious, as Al-Zyoud (2001: 64); Locher (2013: 13), and Shils (1995: 6) have emphasised. Academic freedom must be respected by governmental and institutional authorities, as well as carefully defended by researchers worldwide. As a result, university academics require greater freedom safeguards than the average democratic citizen.

This study's finding is somewhat contrary to Van Alstyne's (1975: 71) study, which wrote that as much as academic freedom protects academic community members, they are not free to do whatever they wish. The scholar noted that the exercise of academic freedom should always carry with its professional standards. Shils established two critical beliefs of the Gentleman Scientist Model; "it protects only the academic (scientific) work of academics, and it requires faculty to be gentlemen, that is, to conform to the behavioural rules and moral standards of their college" (Wilson, 2014:19). This model indicates that academic freedom comes with expectations, responsibilities, and accountability.

However, participants in this group did not discuss the ethical and professional considerations that should be considered by all academics when exercising academic freedom. This demonstrates that the faculty and staff at UNZA regard academic freedom as limitless and are committed to providing strong safeguards for lecturers and students who are committed to the pursuit of knowledge regardless of whether it is socially acceptable. McCrae (2011: 131) reaches a similar result, claiming that academic freedom must be absolute and cannot be offered selectively, or it is not academic freedom at all. Furthermore, the liberty model calls for complete protection of lecturers and professors who discuss contentious political issues or educate students on opposing viewpoints in the classroom.

Another reason academic freedom matters are that it broadens the knowledge frontier. They believed that academic freedom matters in universities because it fosters new knowledge and ideas. Academic freedom played a critical role in advancing knowledge frontiers through venturing into academic activities like research. They perceived the university as a site for creating new concepts, ambitions, knowledge, innovations, and truth bolstered by academic freedom as a precondition for attaining these values.

In Chapter Two, it was reported that knowledge frontiers are broadened through the freedom to provoke, cause offence, and challenge the *status quo* (Hudson and Williams, 2016: 16; Karki, 2015: 28 and Shils, 1995:7). This study's finding is similar to Altbach's assertion that "...universities cannot achieve their potential nor fully contribute to the emerging knowledge-based society without academic freedom" (2007: 7). In agreement, Owusu-Ansah (2015: 173) asserts that academic freedom facilitates the creation and sharing of knowledge. Therefore, the frontiers of academic freedom must be expanded and endorsed.

Also, the findings of this study showed that knowledge generation requires critical thinking, which is buttressed by academic freedom for people to think outside the box. This result is somewhat close to the conclusion drawn in McCrae's (2011: 133) and Joseph's (2017: 3) reports, which observed that academic freedom and critical thought were complementary and advanced knowledge. However, their studies were not in harmony with this study because their emphasis was on fostering students' critical thought instead of academics. Nevertheless, this study indicates that both academics and students are critical players in knowledge generation, and both require critical thinking, which can only occur if there is academic freedom.

The final reason why academic freedom is an indispensable condition for national development is that it plays a crucial role in fostering the public good. Participants indicated that academic freedom endows academics with the freedom to guide the nation on critical issues. Therefore, academic freedom is motivated by the idea that society gains when scholars are free to investigate hypotheses and broaden the scope of current fields of knowledge. Therefore, academics in a university are critical players in advancing the public good. Furthermore, academic freedom helps academics through research to rectify

social ills. Participants noted that academics are seen less as people with the academic freedom to investigate various topics and more as employees to promote the socio-economic value of the country. Therefore, academic university research should address the country's socio-economic needs, advancing wealth creation and social welfare.

The findings above agree with Lanford and Tierney's (2014: 5) contention that institutions of higher learning exist for the public good to advance the country's economic interests by being torchbearers. True academic freedom is fully compatible with community service. The university must always serve the community to which it belongs (Owusu-Ansah, 2015:174). According to the AAUP (2014:2), academic freedom aids the university in playing a pivotal role as an impartial contributor to policy and commerce. Hence, if academics are granted the right to research freely, this will lead to innovations and inventions suitable for the country's development because academics will freely guide the nation based on research.

In the case under examination, the theory that is most appropriate to explain findings is the RDT. The provision of a resource dependence explanation points to an inevitable focus on the resource dependence principle that the survival of an organization depends upon its capacity to obtain necessary resources from the outside environment (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978: 1). While universities require academic freedom to safeguard them, broaden the knowledge frontier, and foster national development by advancing the public good, universities within society that rely on resources and ongoing support owe allegiance to many stakeholders within the environment.

Owing to this, universities continually depend on the external organizations that provide them with limited resources and, in so doing, curtail their academic freedom. This entails that when academic freedom is curtailed, the academics will not be safeguarded from the external environment. They will not be able to broaden the knowledge frontier. They will not be able to promote national growth. This finding is in line with Nienhüser (2008: 10-11), who argued that resource dependence theory assumes that "dependence on critical and important resources influences the actions of organizations and that organizational decision and actions can be explained; depending on the particular dependency situation." Therefore, the dependence of universities on critical and essential

resources from external organizations influences the success of the exercise of academic freedom.

The findings in relation to the first sub-research question have been discussed in the preceding section. The discussion of the study's findings is advanced in the section that follows by concentrating on the discussion of comments regarding the second sub-research question.

6.4 Perceptions of How Academic Freedom is Practiced in the University

Research findings uncovered two interesting realities about how academic freedom was practised UNZA. The participants' perceptions of how academic freedom was practised were both positive and negative. I discuss how academic freedom was practised within the university in the following subsections.

The participants' perceptions of the practice of academic freedom were discussed alongside their understanding of the academic freedom principles, associating this with the role of teaching and research. The findings revealed that academic freedom was practised in teaching and research at UNZA and did not have limitations. There was a strong emphasis on academic freedom through teaching in this category. The participants pointed out that academic freedom was practised by teaching or communicating ideas or facts without being targeted for repression, imprisonment, or job loss. This result ties perfectly with the literature on the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic freedom and Tenure (AAUP, 1940:3). According to the AAUP (1940: 3), academic freedom is practised by freely discussing their subject in the classroom.

Some participants (A 7, A 10, AL 1, and AL 10) also pointed out that academic freedom was practised at UNZA by conducting research of their choice and expressing their conclusions through publication without interference from government or religious authorities or university administrators. This result agrees with Andreescu's (2009: n.p) argument that academics are paid to collect data, reinterpret, and critically evaluate them and generate new concepts. This study further agrees with Gill's (2017: 114) research that it is the responsibility of academics to challenge and examine existing knowledge and be prepared to share it. Shils (1991: 4) also argues that an academic cannot discuss contentious subjects in a classroom unless supported "...with evidence from his

research". The focus was intellectual rigour and relevant, robust research to underpin ideas discussed in the lecture room.

Findings from the research provide evidence that academics and academic leaders did not know how academic freedom was practised at UNZA. Research participants indicated that they did not know how academic freedom was practised because the university did not have a policy framework to guide them. Therefore, the most probable explanation for the negative result is that academic freedom is not *a sine qua non* of UNZA because the academics were not informed about the right. Had it been a prerequisite, they would have known how to identify it and what was expected of them.

This study's finding is consistent with Gill's (2017: 106) and Taiwo's (n.d: 18) studies. They both revealed that the concept of academic freedom was not articulated or publicized within the university. Gill (2017: 106) specifically pointed out that academic freedom as a specific topic of interest did not form an item on the agenda at the sampled universities, possibly signaling a lack of importance. I agree with Gill and Taiwo's study that for academic freedom to be adequately guaranteed, the right should be a subject of discussion among academics and within the university setting. Meetings or conferences in the university advocating and raising awareness on academic freedom at UNZA should be welcomed and should be continuous.

However, this study's finding is somewhat distinct from Ramtohol's study on academic freedom analysis *at the University of Mauritius (UoM)*. According to Ramtohol's (2010: 11) findings, the UoM explicitly endorses the practice of academic freedom as a fundamental right of all academics. However, it is interesting that even though academics at UoM know that academic freedom is upheld and know how it is practised, they do not practice it because of institutional bureaucracy and overdependence on the state, which has caused fear. Regarding UNZA, the university upholds academic freedom, but academics do not even know that it exists. For this reason, they do not know how to practice or exercise it. So UNZA and UoM share one thing in common: academic freedom is not being practised in their institutions. Therefore, while fear has made UoM academics do not practice academic freedom, ignorance has made academics at UNZA not practice or exercise it.

As indicated above, academic freedom was not practised due to the university not having a policy framework to guide academics and academic leaders on how to practice it. However, participants' views demonstrate that the academics and academic leaders at UNZA recognize that a policy framework is required because of the inadequate awareness, knowledge, and expectation of the practice of academic freedom. This finding aligns with all the policy documents (UNZA and Zambia National Policy) reviewed in this study. Unfortunately, both the Republic of Zambia and UNZA have no specific policy document on academic freedom. Consequently, there is very little detail about academic freedom in the university and national policies related to academic freedom.

The *status quo* of academic freedom is left vague. I believe there is a need to formulate a policy document specifically for academic freedom. This policy document will define academic freedom within and outside the academy. Karki's (2015: 82) study similarly concluded that the government must develop a specific policy on academic freedom at the national level. Karki noted that the government must develop a policy framework to safeguard academic freedom for academic freedom to flourish. The university must also create a legal framework to safeguard its faculty members' right to academic freedom (Karki, 2015: 82). The university must have an internal policy to protect academic freedom.

In this instance, the theory that is most appropriate to explain findings linked to the second sub-research question is the social capital theory. A social capital explanation of findings related to this sub-research question leads to an inevitable focus on how social networks offer instrumental, emotional, and informational support. Gayen & Raeside (2007:8) argue that human beings behave in a manner that is compatible with the opinions of individuals with whom they have regular interaction. Individuals acquire resources in the form of information and support from social networks they belong (Portes, 1998: 36). Therefore, social networks assist academics to be informed of joint research, research contracts, and research consultancy. Social capital, through social networks, is tied to academic freedom through the transmission of innovations via communication conduits that exist within a network structure. For instance, the participants in this study stated that academic freedom is practised at UNZA entails that they had built a substantial social capital based

on socialization and member interaction. They knew how practised academic freedom and access to resources from the external environment they had networked with.

On the other hand, the social capital perspective explanation of participants who stated that academic freedom was not practised entails that their social capital generated from social ties or connections was not substantial. Hence, they did not have relations or ties with academic members or external organizations to learn about academic freedom. On a final note, social networks and social capital have a significant impact on academic freedom practice, whereas intellectual capital necessitates "contextually integrated types of knowledge. For this reason, academics need to form networks within the academic community and beyond the university walls to promote academic freedom.

6.4.1. Bringing Theory to Perceptions on How Academic Freedom is Practised

It is inevitable to focus on the fact that the degree of academic freedom at UNZA is based on network relations within the academic community and between the external environments to gain access to resources, consultancy services, and research projects. This finding is in line with Bourdieu's (1985: 248) contention that the social capital theory assumes that "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition."

In line with this Huysman and Wulf (2004: 2) note that "like all forms of capital, social capital is accumulated labour. It has its capitalists, who accumulate social capital in the form of relationships, networks, and contacts". This contention agrees with the current study. Academics who have been in academia over a prolonged period and have formed relationships, networks, and contacts within the academe and the external environment like the industry enjoy more academic freedom because they can easily access financial resources from their connections. This study has confirmed that academic freedom depends on the close relationship or connection between the university and the external environment, such as research funds (Hottenrott and Lawson, 2012: 1).

In addition, since organizations typically lack resources needed to execute their work, they must implement specific measures to sustainably obtain resources (Etomaru et al., 2016: 136). By forming networks with a variety of partners, organizations endeavour to

minimize dependency on a single resource source. Therefore, if organizations generated all the resources required to thrive, it would not be necessary to make "relations" with the external environment (Rossingnoli and Recciardi, 2015: 29). For instance, in this current study, senior academics network with various partners or organizations because UNZA does not have all the essential resources to conduct research. Hence senior or well-connected academics affiliate into a network to access the required resources to regulate their dependence on the university and other external organizations. Therefore, academics should regulate and assess their dependence on the university and its collaborative relationship with the external environment.

This section focused on the practices of academic freedom within the university. The next section focuses on providing comments on findings related to the effects of financial resources on academic freedom.

6.4.2 Financial Resources and Academic Freedom

I deemed it necessary for this study to ask participants to provide their perceptions on the effect of financial resources on academic freedom. The study's findings indicated that financial resources directly affected academic freedom at UNZA.

This finding is similar to Al-Zyoud's (2001: 61) and Sharma's (2015: 279) study, which established that financial resources determine how it will realize its objective of academic freedom. This assertion indicates that a university's financial resources shape its academic freedom. Hence, the study's findings revealed two facets of how financial resources affected academic freedom. First, the direct effect of financial resources on academic freedom at UNZA was both positive and negative. The positive effect of financial resources on academic freedom was prevalent with academics and academic leaders with access to research funds. The negative effect was prevalent with academics and academic leaders without research funds.

Concerning the positive effects of financial resources on academic freedom, participants, particularly the young academics, observed that senior academics with adequate research funds exercised their academic freedom without challenges. Their research was mainly large scale and always of good quality. This result indicates that the effective

exercise of academic freedom is contingent on adequate financial resources. The participants further observed that most senior academics were privileged to win large research projects because they had built up sufficient academic capital and had a track record of funding to attain more funding. However, they expressed disappointment that the senior academics well connected to the funders closed up their social networks.

This observation is similar to Grove's research findings (2017: 164) that the more experienced academics who have accrued a higher degree of intellectual capital and prestige over their careers win significant research grants and have more choice on what research they can undertake. However, Grove's findings are different from this current study's findings regarding senior or experienced academics closing their social networks. Grove's (2017: 172) research findings show that collaborating with young academics by building consortia for large research projects is increasingly critical to securing funding. Many participants recognised forming collaborations in his study to build capital and prestige. Hence, senior academics collaborated with early career academics. The winning of research grants in a university mainly functions on a system of rewards based on intellectual capital and the prestige of an academic.

Findings of the adverse effects of financial resources on academic freedom revealed that inadequate finances harmed the entire exercise of academic freedom. This finding indicates that academics can be given academic freedom on paper, but they cannot exercise that freedom if there are inadequate financial resources. The participants believed that insufficient funding constituted a major impediment to higher education development, indirectly threatening academic freedom. Participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the insufficient funds available for research and conferences, given that the two elements bordered on academic freedom. Participants noted that due to the lack of research funds in the university, academics conducted poor research. This finding agrees with Al-Zyoud's (2001: 61) and Ramtohul's (2012: 13) studies, which report that the inadequate financial resources of the universities might curtail academic freedom. The limited financial base of universities weakens academic freedom for academics and other academic staff members.

The findings also revealed that academics used their money to finance their research because government grants or donor funds were not forthcoming. Findings indicated that self-funding was spurred by the need to publish instead of perishing. Hence academics self-funded their research projects to meet up the demand for promotion. However, academics could not undertake meaningful quality research projects due to limited funds. This finding is similar to Akpan *et al.*'s (2010: 42) study, revealing that not all Nigerian universities' academics received research grants. Hence, most university research had been self-financed by underpaid academics. Academics are compelled to self-fund their research to satisfy the “publish or perish” syndrome.

6.4.3 Theorizing the Challenges of Academic Freedom

To learn about the possible factors impacting the exercise of academic freedom, I considered it vital to ask respondents to identify challenges to academic freedom at UNZA. The findings indicate that academics and academic leaders experienced several challenges in exercising academic freedom causing UNZA to fall short of its purpose of advancing knowledge through scholarship and research. The following are brief expositions of challenges experienced by academics and academic leaders at UNZA.

When describing the challenges experienced by UNZA academics and academic leaders in exercising academic freedom, participants highlighted that the lack of sufficient funding at UNZA was a severe concern for university education, which posed an indirect threat to academic freedom. The research findings found that, due to the country's financial crisis, the government had curtailed the flow of public funds to UNZA, arguing that the institution should earn its own income. As a result, universities were under pressure to find new sources of finance. Thus, academics' salaries have been utilized to support research projects, publications, and international conferences.

However, the finances from their salaries were meagre to conduct large-scale research. As a result, they could only undertake small-scale research initiatives, and the quality of the study findings was oftentimes compromised due to insufficient research funding. Academic freedom was viewed. These financial resources were essentially seen in the need to provide funding for salaries, research, and conferences required to enable

appropriate academic activities. Participants concluded that providing them with financial resources was necessary for advancing the knowledge frontier.

This preceding finding is related to Ramtohum's (2012: 3) study in that insufficient state financing constituted an impediment to academic freedom at UoM. However, some variation was noted in the resolution of both lack public funding. For example, for the UoM to remedy the problem of inadequate funding, it had to scale down the number of support staff to load administrative duties on academics and academic leaders. Such additional duties exhausted the time and energy available to produce knowledge. On the other hand, to resolve the issue, UNZA academics were told to find alternative sources of revenue. They had to start using their salaries to conduct research, which was inadequate for quality research.

One of the study's findings on the challenges UNZA academics and academic leaders experience in exercising academic freedom was heavy teaching obligations. Participants stated that excessive teaching requirements hampered knowledge generation and contributed to the limitation of academic freedom. Some of the above participants mentioned that the extensive teaching duties reduced UNZA to a secondary school where lecturing, marking, and paperwork were the norm. As a result, time became a limited resource for research and critical thinking. The institution was straying from its core and ideal function of knowledge creation and dissemination. Due to the excessive teaching loads, research and publication suffered. This discovery is in line with the results of Ramtohum's (2012: 12) research. Academics at UoM were expected to teach for 270 hours every academic year. Hence, they would complain about lack of time for research owing to severe teaching demands. This scenario impeded knowledge creation, and the UoM became recognized as a teaching university.

The findings of the investigation revealed that the greatest threat to academic freedom at UNZA was government interference. Participants in the study (A 5, A 11, AL 6, AL 9, and AL 12) indicated that the government took the lead and wielded unrestricted authority over the institution, due to financial resources. They emphasized that UNZA, as a public institution, was heavily reliant on government funds, providing fertile ground for increasing government control. The government interfered in the establishment of university

standards and regulations. As a result of such interference, individual freedoms of expression and speech were constrained. The government imposed a conformity regime on freedom of expression, research, and publication, putting the university's reputation in jeopardy.

Evidence in the literature indicates that government interference poses a serious threat to academic freedom. For example, Kilase's (2013: 185) research findings are similar to this study's findings because Sudan's central government similarly controls universities (Kilase, 2013: 185). Government interference in universities is nothing new. Most governments control the planning, funding, and hiring of top university officials such as Vice-Chancellors. The government is regarded as the primary funder of public higher education institutions (Al-Zyoud, 2001:59). As a result, most higher education institutions globally rely on government support (Kori, 2016: 52). As such, governments wield enormous control over what happens in the university.

However, this finding is different from that of Abebe's (2014: 2) study on ethnicity, ideology, and democracy in Ethiopia, which reports that students in Ethiopia are frequently compelled to register for party membership when they become party members, they cease opposing the government and are forced to spy on their lecturers and other students who disagree with the regime, which is contrary to this study. Furthermore, this study focused on academics, not students, and participants did not report that the government or politicians were using students to limit academic freedom.

According to the findings of this study, new academics at UNZA lacked academic freedom orientation. Participants revealed the need for orientation on academic freedom to new academics because orientation would enlighten new academics about academic ethos such as academic freedom. Although academic freedom is a core value at UNZA, most academics, especially young academics, have incomplete information on the principles of academic freedom. As a result, they do not exercise their academic freedom because they do not know that they have the protection afforded by academic freedom as academics at UNZA. Providing new academics with information about their rights and academic freedom could help engage academics in working to strengthen or uphold their freedoms. Other literature has emphasized the importance of orienting new academics

on academic freedom in higher education institutions (Weidner, 2001: 265; Rabban, 1987: 1429f). The scholars rightly argue that the university owes to new academic's clarity and honesty about the principles of academic freedom because by raising awareness of academic freedom, the new academics will be better able and motivated to defend it.

The resource dependence theory is particularly well-suited to this context for explaining findings concerning challenges to academic freedom at UNZA. The findings of this study on the challenges created by limited financial resources and government interference corroborate those of Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) and Slaughter and Leslie (1997). Both studies came to the same conclusion: universities are always at odds with the state over resources, which inhibits their academic freedom. Similar concerns have been expressed about UNZA's academic freedom as a result of its reliance on state support. It's plausible to believe that the university's academic freedom is constrained by its dependence on a single source of funding.

A social capital theory was equally appropriate for explaining the abovementioned findings. It should be highlighted that the lack of orienting new academics on academic freedom may be linked to a lack of bridging social capital necessary to provide information to new academics on academic freedom and fill the "systemic gaps" in the university's network structure. According to Burt (1992), bridging brings together individuals or groups who are unfamiliar with each other in order to develop new social links, supply new knowledge, and fix "structural gaps" in the university's network structure.

6.4.4 The legal framework: Theoretical implications

In stating challenges to academic freedom faced by academics and academic leaders at UNZA, respondents (A 9, A 12, AL 10, AL 12, and AL 13) cited the absence of clear legislative protection for academic freedom of academics and academic leaders as one of the challenges. The study findings demonstrated that the lack of legal protection for academic freedom left it vulnerable to academics' various practices and ideologies. Legal protection would create baseline standards of academic freedom for all academics, regardless of their personal beliefs and behaviors. This would protect or improve academic freedom while also limiting violations by various levels of authority. Participants agreed that there ought to be a panacea to academic freedom that goes beyond the

limitations of UNZA policies for universities, such as enshrining academic freedom in constitutional or legislative frameworks. As a result of the foregoing observation, participants agreed that one of the required measures to safeguard and guarantee academic freedom would be to provide clear legal protection for it.

As indicated by the literature (Karran & Mallinson, 2017: 4; Simpson & Kaufmann, 2019: 17; Vrielink et al., 2011: 118) and the documentary analysis of this study, most institutions, including UNZA, lack legislative protection for academic freedom. As a result, neglecting the legislation of academic freedom may result in substantial changes in academic freedom exercise owing to judicial limitations. In such a context, academic freedom is not taken away; rather, the prospects for its fulfillment are curtailed. Therefore, academic freedom must be legalized in order to establish a representation of its scope and depth.

6.5 Promoting and Improving Academic Freedom: faculty Perspectives

The research findings regarding the last sub-research question reveal that several strategies are worth considering if challenges of exercising academic freedom by academics and academic leaders at UNZA are to be addressed. The following are brief expositions of the suggested strategies for promoting academic freedom at UNZA.

The semi-structured interview findings revealed that developing a policy framework at the university and national level was essential for safeguarding, facilitating, strengthening, and optimizing academic freedom. For example, UNZA or the government had not yet developed a policy framework to protect academic freedom. Some respondents suggested that developing an academic freedom policy framework for academics was essential for spelling out the procedures and criteria by which the institution would safeguard academics as they exercised their academic freedom. According to Vrielink et al.'s (2011: 119) study, a considerable proportion of (European) constitutions and basic laws have particular provisions upholding academic freedom. Even more countries have (also) established particular legislation governing universities or the higher education system. As a result, UNZA or Zambia should follow in the footsteps of European countries by enacting explicit provisions concerning academic freedom.

My document analysis revealed that academic freedom was simply stated as one of the core values, with no explanation of how the institution will safeguard academics exercising their academic freedom. The Zambian constitution, for example, was mentioned under freedom of expression. Academic freedom, for example, is mentioned in the Zambian Constitution under freedom of expression. As a result, academic freedom at UNZA and Zambian universities in general lacked legal protection. These findings indicate how academic freedom is not granted needed significance. Vrieling et al. (2011: 118), in their research propose that academic freedom be 'legalized' since it is important for academics and institutions alike to create a policy on its dimensions and extent. Failure to do so may result in the suppression of academic freedom for academics and academic leaders as a result of government limitations and regulations. For academic freedom to thrive, it is critical to design an academic freedom policy that takes into account the distinctive nature of scientific research and academic endeavors.

Another finding relating to the suggested strategies that promote academic freedom is providing financial support on issues that border on academic freedom. Based on the comments from some participants, financial resources would help facilitate the execution of academic freedom. These comments relate to Sharma's argument that financial resources are an essential ingredient for achieving its objective of academic freedom (2015: 279). This contention implies that if academics and academic leaders at UNZA have financial support from management, government, and NGOs, they can enjoy academic freedom fully by channeling the financial resources towards research and teaching to expand knowledge frontiers.

In line with those mentioned above, other participants agreed that financial resources are a crucial determinant of the realization of academic freedom. However, they believed that depending on government funding was not the solution for realizing the objective of academic freedom but being self-sustaining as a university was a solution. They added that the university could be innovative and think of how to mobilize finances to facilitate the exercise of academic freedom. Their perception was that dependence on state funds threatened their academic freedom.

The third finding of the last sub-research question is to raise awareness of academic freedom among the academic community. The participants A 2, A 5, A 7, AL 5, and AL 13 commented that there was the need for raising awareness among academics at UNZA about the parameters within which academic freedom operates, given that only a few academics were knowledgeable about this right which was essential for the excellent health of the university. They further added that increasing awareness among academics about what academic freedom is could contribute to academics working to safeguard it. For instance, Weidner (2001: 265) and Rabban (1987: 1429f) stress the need to provide academic freedom to academics in higher education institutions because they will be motivated and better positioned to protect or bolster it.

One of the revelations from the study's findings on participants' suggested strategies for promoting academic freedom at UNZA was the university encouraging the dissemination of research findings to the broader public. Participants stressed the need for disseminating research findings because, without adequate and ongoing dissemination of research findings, the efforts of academics are wasted. Furthermore, participants stated that to serve the public good, schools or faculties in the university could use their academic expertise to establish linkages, networks, and partnerships with relevant ministries or industries beyond the university's walls. For instance, the school of education and the Ministry of Education or the school of agriculture with the Ministry of Agriculture can build a relationship by working side by side in formulating policies for national development through the university disseminating their findings. Accordingly, the research findings collected by different schools of faculties of the university can be disseminated to respective ministries to influence the formulation of national policy. However, adequate dissemination requires interaction and cooperation between universities and government ministries because ministries serve the public.

The research findings related to the literature on the university's role in disseminating research and scholarship; academic freedom comprises academics and researchers' rights to communicate their research conclusions freely and broadly (the Association of Research Libraries *et al.*, 2009: 3). This is because the dissemination of knowledge through research practices lies at the heart of the university's mission. Thus,

dissemination is a crucial responsibility of the university. However, despite the acknowledgement that the dissemination of research findings is indispensable to the university's mission, the study, as mentioned earlier, does not explicitly address the dissemination of findings to government ministries to form the basis for government policy formulation.

6.5.1 Theoretical Interpretations of Participant Proposals for Promoting and Improving Academic Freedom

In this instance, a theory that is most suitable to explain findings linked to the last sub-research question is the social capital theory. A social capital explanation will focus on the finding 'to raise awareness of academic freedom among the academic community.' It can be stated that to raise awareness of academic freedom among the academic community, the academic community needs to have substantial bonding social capital. Putnam (2000: 22-23) described Bonding social capital as the "sociological superglue," owing to the strong ties formulated within homogeneous groups and networks. He proposed that the bonding social capital is well suited to offer its members the information required to survive in their day-to-day activities. Hence, only by upholding bonding social capital can UNZA raise awareness of academic freedom among the academic community. Furthermore, bonding social capital enhances communication among individuals who already know each other. By increasing information flows, reciprocity is elevated, and greater trust is earned.

Another social capital explanation is on the university to encourage the dissemination of research findings to the broader public. It is based on social capital's positive returns as a public good. Social capital is productive and facilitates realising goals that would be impossible in its absence. In this regard, it facilitates the realization of government policy formulation through bridging networks between UNZA and government ministries. UNZA can offer new information to ministries to facilitate the formulation of policy (Burt, 1992). The university should devise strategies for ensuring the entire distribution of the wide range of unique and uniquely valuable research findings produced by ministries. To devise a sound policy that enhances national development, it requires the university's schools or faculties to network with related ministries.

A resource dependence perspective was also suitable for explaining findings on providing financial support on issues that border academic freedom. The provision of a resource dependence explanation points to an inevitable focus on the resource dependence principle that the environment provides "essential" resources needed by the organization (Pfeffer/Salancik 2003: 3). In the case of UNZA, to expand its financial resource base, it needs to have substantial social capital with the environment (government, NGOs, religious organizations, among others) to gain financial resources that will facilitate academic freedom exercise. The environment is the central source of financial resources. Therefore, UNZA and the environment need to have strong social ties to easily acquire finances for academic freedom. Since the environment comprises different organizations, UNZA cannot depend on one organisation for resources.

6.6 Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the study's findings. The findings were examined in light of the major research question and its subsidiary questions. To provide answers to the study question and sub-research questions, the findings were critically analysed using the theoretical framework and a literature review. As a result, I discussed the findings in terms of social capital and resource dependence, two theoretical frameworks that influenced my research. The conclusions of the study will be provided in the following chapter. The chapter will present a brief review of the research's findings. Thereafter, it will offer policy and research recommendations to the relevant institutions and authorities.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

7.1 Introduction

In this last chapter, I return to the research problem by highlighting the study's substantial theoretical contribution to research on academic freedom. In the first part, I present an overview of the situation problem and define the objectives I sought to achieve by doing this research. In the following part, I analyze the study's implications for policy and practice, both inside and outside Zambia. Next, I highlight how this research contributes to theory and potential directions for future study. I then present some recommendations based on the significant findings of the study.

7.2 Returning to the Problem

This study focused on addressing the dearth of literature on the perceptions of academic freedom among academics and academic leaders. Accordingly, I developed this research to explore how academics at UNZA perceived academic freedom. The study ultimately sought to uncover the circumstances and factors that enabled or constrained academic freedom through the perceptions of the academic community members at the flagship learning institution in Zambia, UNZA. The problem at the heart of the research was the scant attention paid by scholarship in the arena to voices of the academics from Zambia regarding perceptions of academic freedom. In addition, my study explored the implications of resource impoverishment in constraining (or enabling) academic freedom that had not been studied closely using an empirically specific context, such as Zambia. Two allied theories of social capital and resource dependency provided theoretical anchorage for the study. Therefore, the main objective was to explore how academics at UNZA perceived academic freedom. Three sub-objectives supported the main one.

- To establish how academics and academic leaders at UNZA understand academic freedom;
- To find out how these academics and academic leaders perceive the practice of academic freedom at UNZA; and
- To explore the best practices that academics and academics can propose to promote and improve academic freedom.

Two methods: semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis, were employed in the data collection to develop detailed qualitative data to provide perceptions on the state of academic freedom at UNZA. Based on the collected data obtained through qualitative research methods, several themes and sub-themes or sub-categories emerged, which enabled me to answer the questions that guided the research.

The evidence presented in chapter five and discussed in chapter six provides definite answers to the research questions by weaving together the theories that informed the study, the relevant literature review, and my analysis of the evidence. The findings show that academics at UNZA did not fully enjoy academic freedom. Participant perceptions show that the university management and government implicitly controlled and restricted academics through heavy academic activities, financial limitations, absence of a policy framework for academic freedom, and freedom of expression. These factors conspired to hinder the enjoyment of academic freedom at UNZA.

7.3. Contributions to understandings of Academic Freedom

This study has unearthed a plethora of viewpoints on academic freedom. The wide-ranging views and perceptions of academic freedom that academics and academic leaders shared constitute valid additions to the body of knowledge on academic freedom. Moreover, the insights from Zambian academics testify to the nuances with which the subject matter ought to be viewed. This is particularly important because the global academic community is not homogeneous. How similar phenomena are experienced, taken up and resisted is never uniform but is informed by the contexts in which the events unfold. Thus, the study has yielded critical insights into how globally circulating ideas, such as academic freedom, are seized by local actors—in this example, UNZA academics—and how they are reconfigured in connection to local realities, meanings, and contexts (Dean, 2012), while also emphasizing how such localizations express universal principles in global settings. Thus, my study has created additional avenues for understanding academic freedom.

7.4 Contributions to the Practice of Academic Freedom

A second focal contribution of this study concerns how academics and academic leaders evaluate the practice of academic freedom at UNZA. The positive and negative

evaluations of the faculty members at UNZA can enrich ongoing debates about how academic freedom could be practised in the university world. The study has generated room to compare theoretical assertions on academic freedom to actual academic processes, perceptions, and experiences, whose experiences are at the frontier of the debates.

This study illuminates the intricacies of academic freedom in the Global South. It provides room for future comparative studies on the diverse contexts in which academic freedom may be constrained or enabled. The findings of this study point to the need for the development of institutional policies and best practices in Sub-Saharan African universities that would improve the enjoyment of academic freedom.

Several respondents across UNZA faculty indicated proffered various strategies that could be put in place to facilitate academic freedom at UNZA and similar jurisdictions. The strategies included: developing a policy framework, providing financial support on issues bordering on academic freedom, creating synergies between UNZA and the government, and raising awareness of academic freedom among academics. Thus, this study has the potential to spur the formulation of policies that enable the practice of academic freedom in all its manifestations. Through the empirically specific findings unearthed here, African universities and UNZA might appreciate the need to develop policies that help enshrine academic freedom in the fabric of their activities.

7.5 Contributions to Theory

This research adds three significant theoretical additions to the corpus of knowledge on academic freedom. First, the results contribute to ongoing discussions about what academic freedom entails by contrasting theoretical statements with total views of academics in a particular situation, namely a public higher education institution in Zambia. As a result, my research has contributed to these discussions by demonstrating how one set of local actors in the Global South understands and conceptualizes academic freedom.

A second theoretical contribution of this work is the new use of a theory to investigate the issue of academic freedom. Using social capital theory to emphasize how academic

freedom may be hindered or enhanced is novel in the research arena. My research has contributed to theory development by providing a conceptual category that may be utilized to investigate academic freedom in various higher education environments both inside and outside of Sub-Saharan Africa. This theoretical investigation may be a logical method to investigate how social capital might give affordances for academic community members to resist, adapt, or exploit their surroundings' resource endowments.

My study's third theoretical contribution is to open new paths for comprehending academic freedom. Academic freedom has been depicted in my work as historically constructed and depending on various elements, including the resource base provided by the environment in which the institution functions. My research adds to the interpretivist research paradigm, which holds that there is no reality except as relevant stakeholders perceive it.

7.6 Recommendations

The findings of the research presented above prompted the proposal of the following recommendations:

7.6.1 Recommendations for Improvement of Academic Freedom

- The Zambian government should uphold and guarantee academic freedom for academics at UNZA. The government must not be an enemy of academic freedom and must take effective measures against the abusers of academic freedom. The law must be the responsibility of the government.
- Interviews with study participants highlight the necessity of having a robust legislative framework to ensure academic freedom as a critical step in ensuring its continued protection at UNZA. To accomplish this purpose, the Zambian government must ensure academic freedom is preserved by including it in the Zambian Constitution and the Higher Education Act. Academic freedom will always be vulnerable to violations by a wide range of actors unless it is legally safeguarded in a way that guides, formalises, and informs actions on the ground. It is suggested that all members of the academic community have their freedom to free inquiry legally safeguarded. As a result, legislation enshrining academic freedom must

include a clear, detailed, and accurate description of academic freedom, including topics like the freedom to conduct research, the freedom to express ideas both inside and outside the university, and the freedom to choose one's area of study and electives. Unlike how it is implicitly featured in the constitution, under the freedom of expression. The process of developing legal protection for academic freedom must be based on consensus and implemented in a way that encourages participation and communication from all parties involved.

- The government should recognise the significance of academic freedom in socioeconomic growth and greatly increase UNZA funding to foster academic freedom through research and dissemination of findings. Adequate funding for UNZA is an integral part of promoting the academic process, which includes (teaching, research, training, etc.). By so doing, academic freedom will steadily be enhanced in favour of the knowledge society of Zambia.
- The government should give full autonomy to UNZA to make autonomous decisions on its mandate for research, teaching and community service on the premise of academic freedom.
- The government should foster tolerance and acceptance of opposing viewpoints and actively support voices of conscience in society. The intellectual approach must be given more attention. If the country is to progress, it must adopt more intellectual approaches to debate and discuss developmental issues.

7.6.2 Recommendations to UNZA

- UNZA management should raise awareness among academics about academic freedom. Academics should be subjected to appropriate induction in line with the principles of academic freedom practised through teaching, research, and community service. Providing academic freedom information to academics, mainly newly recruited academics, is vital for fostering academic freedom because they will be motivated and better positioned to defend and improve academic freedom. It is essential to discuss academic freedom in the university if it is to return to a first-order value.

- To eliminate the culture of fear in academics, UNZA should consider developing a code of conduct for academics on how to exercise academic freedom. When academics know how academic freedom should be exercised, they can freely and confidently.
- UNZA should develop institutional ties with industry, the private sector, and the public sector to enhance sharing of information, inform policy and facilitate access to finances.
- To protect academics, UNZA should establish a policy document exclusively dedicated to academic freedom, or it can include academic freedom in all of its policies and other documents. Promoting academic freedom will help UNZA advance its knowledge frontiers.

7.6.3 Recommendations to Academics

- Individually and collaboratively, academics at UNZA should be vigilant to any infringement on academic freedom and be prepared to do whatever is required to protect it.

7.6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

There are gaps in 'academic freedom.' Little has been done on studies based on 'academic freedom in Zambia.' The area of 'academic freedom' is almost a virgin field in terms of academic investigation, thus the need to open it up to more academic enquiry in Zambia.

Considering the above, the current study centred explicitly on 'academic freedom for academics at UNZA.' As a result, additional research may include a broader sample to include, for example, disabled academics and students, whose feedback could offer increased insight into the state of academic freedom. It would mean that further research involving other stakeholders would be worth pursuing to determine the degree of equality and the conditions for enhancing academic freedom at UNZA. A wider pool of participants can lead to a greater transferability of conclusions. A possible strategy would be to seek a more diverse group of the institution.

It will also be interesting to conduct a comparative analysis between public and private universities and between public and Christian universities to uncover similarities and disparities in academic freedom and examine how they safeguard the academic freedom of their participants.

Similarly, there is a need to examine how women academics or women academic leaders exercise academic freedom compared to men. It is also recommended to undertake a comparative analysis of academic freedom for senior and junior academics.

Finally, the qualitative nature of academic freedom and its infringement raises whether academic freedom can ever be studied based on quantitative standards. This research did not aim to make a quantifiable measure of academic freedom but to measure what academic freedom is would make a drastic step toward understanding the state of academic freedom.

7.7 Epilogue

The study set out to understand academics' perceptions regarding academic freedom at UNZA. The participants provided extensive perceptions of academic freedom. The findings indicated that academic freedom is essential for fulfilling the university's research, teaching, and community service mission. Furthermore, the study showed that the university needs to safeguard academic freedom to offer academics positive motivation to accomplish the university's mission. However, as significant as academic freedom was perceived by participants, it was discovered that academics at UNZA did not wholly enjoy academic freedom. The study showed that university management and the government indirectly violated and controlled academics by heavy academic responsibilities, financial restraint, lack of academic freedom policy, and freedom of expression. All this hampered the enjoyment of academic freedom at UNZA. However, they acknowledged that they had not encountered any severe or gross violation or limitation on their academic freedom.

The findings of this study will contribute to the scholarly literature on "Academic Freedom in Zambia." Specifically, the study's findings will give insight into the status and scope of academic freedom academics face at UNZA. Before this study, I had not come across

any studies in academic circles surrounding academics' perceptions of academic freedom at UNZA. This research thus provides detailed qualitative evidence on the status of academic freedom as perceived by academics. In addition, this research also aimed to offer solutions to the challenges of implicit violations of academic freedom at UNZA by providing recommendations about how to address the challenge. Considering the above, it can be confidently mentioned that this study's findings will provide new insights in 'academic freedom' about how the challenge of implicit violations of academic freedom can be understood and resolved, especially in universities in Zambia.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMICS

Dear Respondent,

I am a Doctor of Philosophy (Philosophy of Education) student at the University of South Africa carrying out research on **the Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia**.

You have been identified as one of the participants to be interviewed in this study, and your participation will help the research.

Your participation will be highly appreciated. I thank you in advance for your effort and cooperation.

Sibeso Lisulo - Student No: 51894114

This interview aims to establish how academics interpret and perceive academic freedom at the University of Zambia. The data to be collected will only be used for academic purposes. Your confidentiality is highly guaranteed.

1. What is your understanding of academic freedom?
2. In your view, is academic freedom important for a public university like the University of Zambia?
[Probe: To what extent? Why or why not?]
3. Can you tell me how academic freedom is practised within the university?
4. You have recently reverted to academic tenure. How is academic tenure safeguarding academic freedom at the University of Zambia?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

5. Are there any ways in which the University of Zambia restricts academic freedom?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

6. Are there any ways in which the government constrains academic freedom?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

7. In your experience, have there been any challenges to academic freedom?

If the answer is “yes”. [Probe: Can you tell me about them?]

8. Do you think the University of Zambia is free from government interference?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

9. Are there research areas or opinions on subjects that might be considered inappropriate for academics in a government university? Why?

10. Are there any general policies to safeguard the academic freedom of academics at the University of Zambia? If yes, how applicable are they? If not, why?

11. Does the School of Education have any internal policy to safeguard the academic freedom of academics? If yes, what are they, and how effective are they? If not, why?

12. What are your suggestions for improving academic freedom for academics at the University of Zambia?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC LEADERS

Dear Respondent,

I am a Doctor of Philosophy (Philosophy of Education) student at the University of South Africa carrying out research on the Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia.

You have been identified as one of the participants to be interviewed in this study, and your participation will help the research.

Your participation will be highly appreciated. I thank you in advance for your effort and cooperation.

Sibeso Lisulo - Student No: 51894114

This interview aims to assess the strategic role of academic leaders in articulating and reinforcing academic freedom within departments or faculties. The data to be collected will only be used for academic purposes. Your confidentiality is highly guaranteed.

1. How would you say academic freedom is understood in your institution?
2. In your view, is academic freedom important for a public university like the University of Zambia?

[Probe: To what extent? Why or why not?]

3. Are there ways in which the University of Zambia enhances the academic freedom of those involved in research?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

4. You have recently reverted to academic tenure. How is academic tenure safeguarding academic freedom at the University of Zambia?
5. Do you think academics are free to publish their research?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

6. Do you think that academics are free to express their views?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

7. Are there any ways in which the University of Zambia restricts academic freedom?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

8. Are there any ways in which the government constrains academic freedom?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

9. In your experience as an academic leader, what have been the challenges involved in implementing the university's policy on academic freedom? Have you had to deal with any problematic cases?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

10. Do you think the University of Zambia is free from government interference?

[Probe: Kindly explain your perspective]

11. Universities can attract large amounts of external, private funds for activities such as research and publication. For example, do you think academic freedom is restricted at the University of Zambia because the university receives more of its funding through external sources?

[Probe: Please explain why or why not]

12. Are there any general policies to safeguard the academic freedom of academics at the University of Zambia? If yes, how applicable are they? If not, why?

13. What are your suggestions for improving academic freedom for academics at the University of Zambia?

APPENDIX C: DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS GUIDE

Key Documents (UNZA and National Policy Documents) related to Academic Freedom

1. Is academic freedom present in the selected vital document of the University of Zambia (UNZA)?
2. Is academic freedom a central aspect of UNZA's selected vital documents?
3. Does the financial position of UNZA affect the academic freedom of its academic members of staff?
4. Do some selected UNZA key documents highlight challenges UNZA academics face in exercising academic freedom?
5. Is academic freedom granted attention in the Zambian Constitution and Zambia Higher Education Act?

APPENDIX D: ETHICAL APPROVAL



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2017/10/18

Ref: **2017/10/18/51894114/09/MC**

Dear Ms Lisulo

Name: Ms S Lisulo

Student: 51894114

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2017/10/18 to 2020/10/18

Researcher:

Name: Ms S Lisulo

E-mail address: Sibeso.lisulo@yahoo.com

Telephone: 260 977 264833

Supervisor:

Name: Prof VJ Pitsoe

Email: Pitsovj@unisa.ac.za

Telephone: +27 12 429 4436

Title of research:

A critical investigation into the perceptions of academics on academic freedom at the University of Zambia

Qualification: D Ed in Educational Foundations

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2017/10/18 to 2020/10/18.

*The **low risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2017/10/18 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:



University of South Africa
Pretter Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date 2020/10/18. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2017/10/18/51894114/09/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Dr M Claassens
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
mcdtc@netactive.co.za



Prof V McKay
EXECUTIVE DEAN

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

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www.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX E: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Sibeso Lisulo,
The University of Zambia,
School of Education,
Department of Educational Administration & Policy Studies,
P.O. Box 32379.
Lusaka.

The Registrar,
The University of Zambia,
P.O. Box 32379.
Lusaka.

17th August 2017.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

My name is Sibeso Lisulo. As part of my doctoral studies to obtain the Doctor of Philosophy *in Philosophy of Education at the University of South Africa*, I am investigating *Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia*. My supervisor is Prof. Victor J. Pitsoe, and he is in the *Department of Leadership and Management* in the College of Education at the *University of South Africa*. Therefore, we request your permission to conduct research at the University of Zambia.

The target population for the proposed study are academics from some selected schools of the University of Zambia. The academics will be involved in the study through interviews based on the topic above, lasting approximately 45 minutes each.

The study aims to establish how academic freedom is interpreted and perceived by academics undertaking their day-to-day work at the University of Zambia. Their perceptions will help us establish how academic freedom is being exercised to make the University of Zambia an actual engine for knowledge generation and innovation. The study shall contend that academic freedom should strengthen knowledge generation if adequately practised. It will further examine the meanings, content, and challenges of academic freedom at the University of Zambia.

The benefits of the study are that the results will be informative to all academic members of staff regarding the exercise of academic freedom. It will recommend the introduction of orienting academics on the tenets of academic freedom, which are exercised through research, teaching and community service. On the one hand, the significant contribution of this study is to explore the concept of academic freedom. It is assumed that when academics are aware of academic freedom, they are likely to minimize interference and protect the right of teaching, learning and research. This is ultimately important to the university to accomplish the mission of teaching and research.

Please be assured that all ethical issues relating to research will be observed. I therefore kindly request your permission to start data collection. If you need more details concerning the research, my contact details are mobile: +260977264833 and email: sibeso.lisulo@yahoo.com and my supervisor's email address is pitsovj@unisa.ac.za. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours Faithfully,

Sibeso Lisulo (Student Number: 51894114)

APPENDIX F PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

Email: registrar@unza.zm
Tel/Fax +260 211 253952
Telex: ZA 44370

Registrar's Office
P.O. BOX 32379
Lusaka, Zambia

23rd August, 2017

Ms. Sibeso Lisulo
University of Zambia
Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies
UNZA

Dear Ms. Lisulo

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Reference is made to the letter dated 17th August, 2017 on the matter captioned above.

This serves to inform you that your request to collect data from the University of Zambia, for your research work on "**A Critical Investigation into the Perception of Academic on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia (UNZA)**" has been granted. This is to enable you complete your Doctoral Studies in Philosophy of Education at the University of South Africa.

By copy of this letter, the Deputy Registrar (Academic Affairs) and other relevant officers are hereby notified of the approval.

Yours sincerely

Sitali Wamundila (Mr.)
REGISTRAR

c.c. Vice-Chancellor
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Deputy Registrar (Academic Affairs)

APPENDIX G: LETTER REQUESTING ACADEMICS TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERVIEW

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study. My name is Sibeso Lisulo, and I am a doctoral student in South Africa. My research on the Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I would like your views and opinions on academic freedom at the University of Zambia.

The benefits of the study are that the results will be informative to all academic members of staff regarding the exercise of academic freedom. In addition, it will recommend the introduction of orienting academics on the tenets of academic freedom, which are exercised through research, teaching and community service. On the one hand, the significant contribution of this study is to explore the concept of academic freedom. On the other hand, it is assumed that when academics are aware of academic freedom, they are likely to minimize interference and protect the right of teaching, learning and research. This is ultimately important to the university to accomplish the mission of teaching and research.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an interview of approximately 45 minutes in length in a mutually agreed upon location at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study without any negative consequences.

The interview will be audio-recorded to collect accurate and later transcribed for analysis with your kind permission. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and add or clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study, and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 12 months in my locked office. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in deciding on participation, please contact me on +260977264833 or by e-mail at Sibeso.lisulo@yahoo.com.

I look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this research project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the following consent form.

Yours Faithfully,

Sibeso Lisulo.

Consent form:

I have read the information presented in the invitation letter about the study on the Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and add any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I can allow my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses. I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in publications from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous. I was informed that I might withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. I agree to participate in this study of my own free will with full knowledge of all preceding.

Participants Name.....

Participant Signature :

Researcher Name:

Researcher Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX H: LETTER REQUESTING ACADEMIC LEADERS TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERVIEW

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study. My name is Sibeso Lisulo, and I am a doctoral student in South Africa. My research on the Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom at the University of Zambia. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic. I want your views and opinions on academic freedom at the University of Zambia.

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The interview will be audio-recorded to collect accurate and later transcribed for analysis with your kind permission. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and add or clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study, and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password-protected computer for 12 months in my locked office. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in deciding on participation, please contact me on +260977264833 or by e-mail at Sibeso.lisulo@yahoo.com.

I look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this research project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the following consent form.

Yours Faithfully,

Sibeso Lisulo.

Consent form:

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Participant Name :

Participant Signature :

Researcher Name:

Researcher Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX I: CERTIFICATE OF EDITING AND PROOFREADING

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+26097990133

1625, MEANWOOD IBEX,
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

To whom It May Concern

To my knowledge, this is the definitive proof that I was the one who edited Sibeso Lisulo's PhD thesis, Perceptions of Academics on Academic Freedom At the University of Zambia.

It has been a pleasure to deal with it because of the high quality of the writing. Typographical and punctuation mistakes have been the primary focus of my correction. After conducting a thorough editing and proofreading process, my goal was to ensure that my client's PhD-level writing was error-free. I am hopeful that the University of South Africa faculty will accept the thesis in its current format.

I am founder and proprietor of FerdNet EduClean Solutions

Sincerely,



Ferdinand Mwaka Chipindi, PhD

FERDNET EDUCLEAN SOLUTIONS

APPENDIX J: TURNITIN ORIGINALITY REPORT

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