



## Effects of Civic Education on Learners' Decision-Making: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools in Lusaka District, Zambia

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### ABSTRACT:

Civic education plays a vital role in shaping the decision-making abilities of learners. It equips learners with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become informed and responsible citizens. Hence, the purpose of this study was to assess the effects of civic education on learner's decision-making in the selected secondary schools of Lusaka district, Zambia. The study was guided by the following objectives: (1) To analyze the effects of civic education on learner's decision-making in secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia. (2) To assess the challenges encountered by learners and teachers of Civic Education in the learning of the subject in secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia. (3) To suggest ways of addressing the challenges encountered in the teaching and learning of Civic Education in secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia. The study adopted a mixed methods approach which is a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to sample head teachers, teachers, and pupils. Data was obtained from the respondents through interviews and questionnaires. Data analysis consisted of content analysis of the interview responses and item analysis of the questionnaire responses; the data gathered was analyzed according to the themes of the study and the order of the research objectives. Data generated from the questionnaires was analyzed manually by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 26) and Microsoft Excel (version 16) to come up with frequency tables, pie charts, and bar graphs to analyze data. The study established that the effect of civic education on decision-making included empowering learners to be well-informed in decision-making, equipping learners with knowledge about society, learners experiencing membership in local groups as well and fostering good character of learners as members of the citizens. According to the findings, respondents stated that coping with reading materials, instructional problems, and becoming an active learner were some of the challenges encountered by learners when learning civic education while for teachers included limitations of standardized testing while, balancing diverse learning needs, revision on the curriculum, teacher-pupil ratio, work overload to plan for classes and also lack reliable textbooks. Hence, the study recommended that there is a need for secondary schools to strengthen Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities as a response to enhancing reflective teaching strategies in subjects such as Civic Education.

**Keywords:** Civic Education, Civic Engagement, Civic Rights, Pedagogical Practices and Social Change.

### 1.1 Introduction

The initial feasibility study on the introduction of Civic Education in Zambia's high Schools was commissioned by the Southern University /Democratic Governance project under USAID in 2017. This study was undertaken by a group of experts who were led by Professor Geoffrey Lungwangwa, an academician at the time from the University of Zambia. The findings pointed clearly to the fact that Civic Education needed to be extended to the high school level as opposed to the junior level of the school system where it was confined partially for many years under the guise of civics. However, due to some institutional framework challenges at the time the vision could not be realized and it was not until 2002 that another study was embarked upon. This time it was commissioned by the Governance Portfolio of the Irish Aid (Abdi, 2010). The main aim of the study was to determine the feasibility of introducing Civic Education in Zambia's high schools and also identify the current context as well as the structure, processes strategies and support necessary services for its possible introduction. As was the early findings, it was identified that there was an urgent need for the introduction of Civic Education at the high school level to mitigate the gap arising from the confinement of the subject to the junior level of our school system. Since independence, there have been successive committees formed to address educational issues. For instance, in 1996 a committee was formed to redefine educational policies and objectives. The report produced by this committee emphasized the need to strengthen national unity and to promote the economic, social, and cultural aspirations of the people of Zambia (MoE, 1996). Civic education was purposely chosen because the subject's central goal is to address issues that promote social cohesion and sound democratic citizenship. Civic education, therefore, offers a platform for the explicit discussion of issues that would promote peace, not only in the confinement of the classroom but social cohesion as a whole. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2009), civic education is defined as educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society. The Program's long-term goal is to create sustained public awareness of, adherence to, and engagement with the Constitution.

Civic education (also known as citizen education or democracy education) can be broadly defined as the provision of information and learning experiences to equip and empower citizens to participate in democratic processes (Chanda, 2023). Education can take very different forms, including classroom-based

learning, informal training, experiential learning, and mass media campaigns. Civic Education can be targeted at children or adults, in developed or developing countries, and at the local, national, or international level. As such, civic education is an approach that employs a range of different methods and is often used in combination with other participatory governance tools. Civic education is concerned with three different elements: civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic disposition. Civic knowledge refers to citizens' understanding of the workings of the political system and of their own political and civic rights and responsibilities (e.g. the rights to freedom of expression and to vote and run for public office, and the responsibilities to respect the rule of law and the rights and interests of others). Civic skills refer to citizens' ability to analyze, evaluate, take, and defend positions on public issues, and to use their knowledge to participate in civic and political processes (e.g. to monitor government performance, or mobilize other citizens around particular issues). Civic dispositions are defined as the citizen traits necessary for a democracy (e.g. tolerance, public spiritedness, civility, critical-mindedness, and willingness to listen, negotiate, and compromise) (Finkel, 2000).

Ideas of Civic Education also known as "Citizenship Education and democratic education" have gained prominence in recent times and are now being discussed in line with some civic republican thoughts. In this study, it has to be stated from the outset that the two concepts, "Civic Education and Citizenship Education" will be used interchangeably to mean the same thing throughout the study. It is true that in some other circles, the two are distinctively separated and have different meanings. However, it is not the intention of this study to bring out this distinction; such a task would be left to other scholars who might be interested in future to do studies dealing with the distinction between the two concepts. Peterson (2017) argues that "there is a strong sense in which Civic Education curricular programs and initiatives in many Western democratic nations are influenced by a civic republican agenda". In other words, Ibid (2017) seems to remind us that in looking at Civic Education one needs to examine it in the context of civic republican political thought which is not an easily definable entity as its principles and ideas which comprise civic republican commitments usually find expression in a range of political writings. This aspect is important in the context of this study as it indicates the readers that there could be some conceptual difficulties in the way Civic Education is defined and understood by different players in the field. This point has to be noted from the outset to avoid some misunderstanding of the concept in the study.

This therefore entails that the subject of "Citizenship Education" or "Civic Education" is becoming one of the significant areas of study in the school curricula in different nations and as a matter of fact, the subject is being seen as having the potential to drive social change and transformation in society (USAID, 2002). It is also important to state here that while Civic Education is becoming one of the significant areas of study in schools, the method of delivery to the learners is equally very important and is a key component in the realization of the kind of change that we want to see in society. This argument or position is also supported by, Harnish (2016) who contends that "such a program is pivotal to the development of any society". Though Harnish does not directly relate to social change and transformation of society the very mention of development somewhat indicates social change and transformation. The study sees the two concepts thus social change and transformation as part of development in one way or the other. As such in this study, my usage of social change and transformation is loosely connected to the broader context of development. Therefore, the teaching of Civic Education should be seen in the context of bringing about the desired change in society. In this sense, Magasu et.al (2020) spell out the very fact that through Citizenship Education individuals are nurtured; become aware of their culture and other perspectives; are encouraged to be compassionate and empathetic towards the powerless in society; tend to promote justice, tolerance, and democratic ideals which are key elements in building transformed communities. From my perspective, I see the issues above as some of the key elements that could come out of Civic Education and propel social change and transformation of society.

ACARA (2012), has argued that "an effective democratic citizenship education program should not only provide learners with the necessary knowledge but also with opportunities for the development of desirable traits of public and private character." For Brilliant (1999), the desirable traits include among other things, "justice, respect for individual worth, fairness, co-operation, persistence, moral responsibility, empathy for others, care, civility, respect for the law, civic-mindedness and honesty". Again, it can be seen from Butts that there is no mention of social change and transformation of society but that does not mean that in this study we should not use the two concepts simply because they are not mentioned by other scholars or that there are difficult to conceptualize. On the contrary, we need to look at them in the broader context in which they are used and their relevance to the study at hand. It is true that the two concepts could be broad and complicated to talk about but should not be avoided. For this reason, I use them in this study to serve as relevant indicators to those who would have been exposed to the principles and practices of Civic Education. Such desirable traits as those contended by Ibid (1999) whether public and private if well-articulated during teaching and learning of Civic Education have the potential to bring about a change of mindsets in the learners and ultimately lead to social change and the transformation of society.

## ***1.2. Statement of the Problem***

The aims and objectives of Civic Education tend to be influenced by an understanding of citizenship itself with special regard given to civic involvement and engagement in the improvement of the grades of learners (Avery, 2014). However, this aspect has remained a contested matter. In the past civic education was chiefly concerned with an individual's relationship to the nation state. Consequently, the principal aims of Citizenship Education were to build a common identity and a shared history, and to encourage patriotism and loyalty to the nation (Anderson, 2019). While this was so, this position has since changed and calls for other criteria of examining the core aim of Civic Education and the effect it has on learners' performance in schools. Shinzha (2016) reinforces the above statement by stating that, "the effectiveness of Civic Education in developing academic performance positively [is] dependent upon improving knowledge and abilities." Such abilities as stated by Ibid (2016), involves aspects such as, "clear reasoning, critical thinking, empathy, reflection, and decision making." Additionally, CIVCOM (2005) also states that, "programs designed to foster civic participation among the students must also include opportunities for them to reflect on community participation". This is an important argument that needs careful and serious consideration if we are to understand and appreciate the teaching and learning of Civic Education in schools. However, despite all these statements

advanced by different scholars on Civic Education there seems to be unclear evidence suggesting the extent to which Civic Education serves as an indicator to good academic performance/or the transformation of society through decisions made by learners in the secondary schools. It was from this background that the study was conducted to assess the effects of Civic Education on learners' decision-making in selected secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia.

### ***1.3. The Purpose of the Study***

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of Civic Education on learners' decision-making in selected secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia.

### ***1.4. Research Objectives***

The objectives of the study were to:

- Analyze the effects of civic education on learner's decision-making in secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia.
- Assess the challenges encountered by learners and teachers of Civic Education in the learning of the subject in secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia.
- Suggest ways of addressing the challenges encountered in the teaching and learning of Civic Education in secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia.

### ***1.5. Conceptual Framework***

Despite the many positive attributes given to Civic Education about its capacity to provide knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions to the learners it is without some conceptual challenges that require some discussion in this study. Torney-Purta et al (2012), have observed that "Civic Education has been identified as one subject area which has the potential to promote citizenship and democracy and this could explain the reasons behind the renewed interest world over." The ACARA Report (2012) has noted that Civic Education as a subject provides young people with, "the confidence, knowledge, understanding and skills to develop their civic identity, live as citizens in their local and wider communities and create a future that will enhance society". Such an understanding of Civic Education sounds interesting in that it attempts to show how Civic Education is closely linked to both the local and wider communities (Swick & Joost, 2011). It also shows the aspect of service learning especially when it comes to providing opportunities for learners to explore local, national, regional, and global issues and priorities that link to a broad cross-section of societal needs. As such, it would appear that Civic Education is characterized by learners engaging with and creating solutions for authentic situations and issues. Such type of Civic Education provides the learners with situations where they can be allowed to explore scenarios, generate and develop ideas, research and experiment, and engage in problem-solving using their knowledge, skills, and understanding of values related to Civic Education. What is not clear is whether this kind of approach is grounded among those who are supposed to teach Civic Education in schools. The problem here is in the manner the concepts are explained and may not be understood in a similar fashion elsewhere and even the application of the concepts in the teaching process might be differently applied.

### ***1.6. Significance of the Study***

It is anticipated that the findings of the study would be important to various stakeholders; the national government (Ministry of General Education), the District Education Board Secretary's office, and the international donors. It is also hoped that the findings of the study would be important in understanding of the study variables; planning, community participation, financing, monitoring, and evaluation and their influence on the learners of the whole school program hence informing them on necessary mitigation strategies on their effects such as improvement in civic education. Further, it is hoped that the study would also contribute to the body of knowledge in understanding the effect of civic education on learner's decision making in schools.

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## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### ***2.1. Study Design***

The study adopted a mixed methods approach which is a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. Exploratory and descriptive designs were also considered appropriate as they allowed for more flexible strategies of data collection to answer the research questions. The study was aimed at collecting information from respondents on the effects of Civic Education on learners' decision making in selected secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia.

### ***2.2. Research Site***

The research was conducted in Lusaka district in Zambia in some selected secondary schools from which respondents were also sampled.

### 2.3. Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure

The population for the study comprised head teachers, teachers, and learners of Civic Education at the selected secondary schools. The target population was 2000. The sample size involved a total of 200 respondents which included five (5) head teachers, one from each selected school. Fifteen (15) teachers of Civic Education, three from each selected school. One hundred eighty (180) learners of Civic Education, thirty-six from each selected school. The study employed both purposive and simple random sampling on different participants from the selected secondary schools. Simple random sampling was used on the learners of Civic Education Purposive sampling was used on the head teachers and teachers of Civic Education for convenient purposes.

### 2.4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed qualitatively as the semi-structured interview schedules were used as data collection instruments. The thematic approach was used, where data analysis started with categorizing themes from the semi-structured interview schedules. The data gathered was analyzed according to the themes of the study and the order of the research objectives. Data generated from the questionnaires were analyzed manually by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 26) and Microsoft Excel (version 16) to come up with frequency tables, pie charts, and bar graphs to analyze data.

### 2.5. Ethical Issues

The study avoided pressuring respondents to take part in the research. Alternatively, permission, informed consent, and assent were obtained from respondents involved in the research, and the research topic was strategically selected to ensure that there was no harm whatsoever to the research respondents. Permission from the District Education Board for Lusaka District (DEBS) was sought to carry out this study. In this research, the study was fully conscious of the need to abide by the ethical rule of respecting the privacy of individuals taking part in the research. Interviews were not conducted on a one-to-one basis; instead, participants were grouped and identified using their titles. In the same way, all the respondents of the research were to remain unidentified to the public as all their valuable views, opinions, and perceptions were only known by the researchers for use only in the research, and participant's identities will forever remain hidden.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following findings and discussions were presented according to set research objectives:

### 3.1. Effects of Civic Education on Learner's Decision Making

The first objective of the study was to analyze the effects of Civic Education on learner's decision making. The figure below shows responses from learners on the effects of civic education on decision making. From the findings, 23% indicated that civic education empowers them to be well-informed in decision making. 20% indicated that civic education equips them with knowledge about the society. 27% stated that learners experience membership in local groups. While 30% of respondents stated that it fosters good character of learners as members of the community. Finkel (2000) narrates that Civic Education empowers young people to be well-informed, active citizens and allows them to change the world around them. It is a vital part of any democracy and equips ordinary people with knowledge about democracy and the Constitution. For example, voting is a major responsibility every citizen should take advantage of. As a citizen, young people are required to follow the laws of the state and local government. If they disagree with a law or think public policy could be improved, it's a great opportunity to get involved and have a voice in our government. Furthermore, the study found that Civic Education provides students with a foundational understanding of government structures, political processes, and societal issues. This knowledge enables them to make more informed decisions when it comes to voting, participating in public discourse, and engaging with civic matters. Civic Education encourages critical thinking and analysis of complex social and political issues. Students learn to evaluate arguments, assess evidence, and consider multiple perspectives before making decisions. This critical thinking extends beyond politics and can benefit decision-making in various aspects of life.

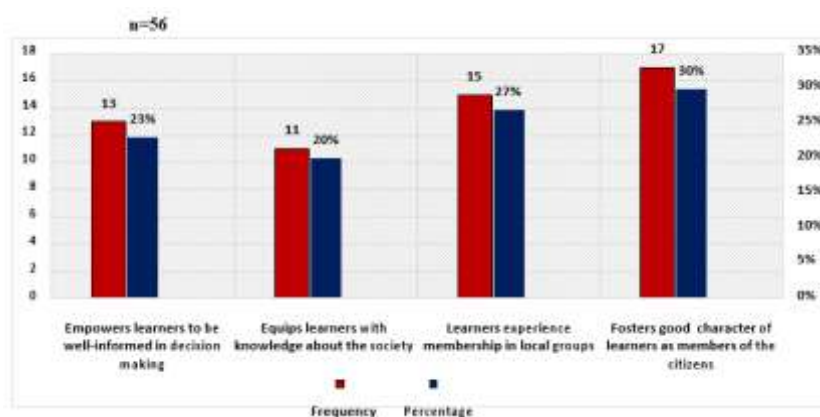
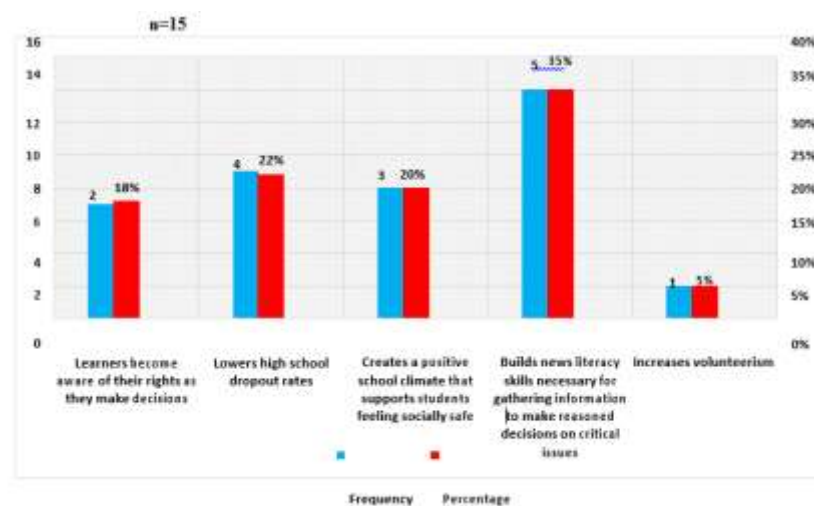


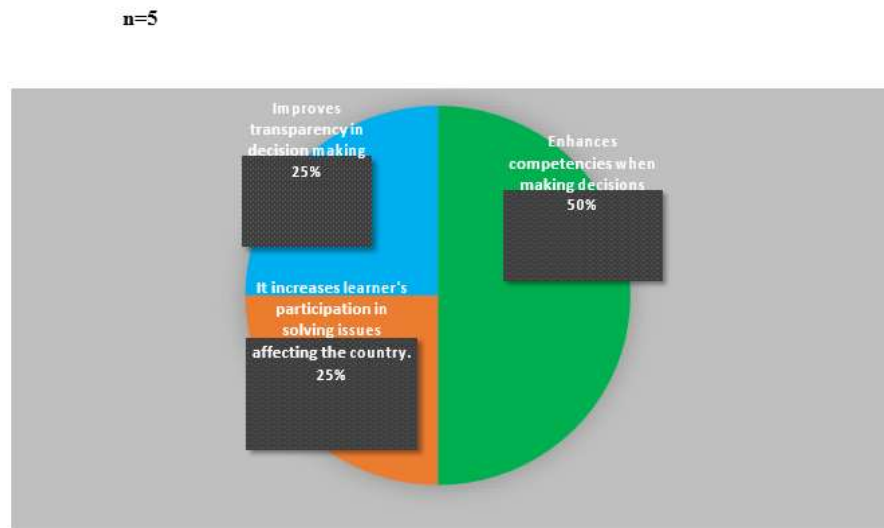
Figure 1. Learner's Responses on the Effects of Civic Education on Learners' Decision Making

According to the findings below, 5% of respondents indicated that Civic Education increases volunteerism. 18% stated that Civic Education makes learners aware of their rights as they make decisions. Further, 22% indicated that Civic Education lowers high school dropout. 20% of respondents stated that Civic Education creates a positive school climate that supports students feeling socially safe while 35% of respondents stated that Civic Education builds news literacy skills necessary for gathering information to make reasoned decisions on critical issues. Civic education often encourages active civic participation, which can lead to a more engaged and responsible citizenry. Engaging in community service, volunteering, and participating in local governance can help learners make decisions that positively impact their communities. Throughout history, character education has been the shared responsibility of parents, teachers, and members of the community, who come together to support positive character development. According to Arbues (2014), Civic Education gives people the knowledge and skills to understand, challenge, and engage with democratic society including politics, the media, civil society, the economy, and the law. Societies need active, informed, and responsible citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities and contribute to the political process. Civic Education helps them to develop self-confidence and a sense of agency, and successfully deal with life changes and challenges such as bullying and discrimination. According to Mukaba (2018), Civic Education is a tool that enables learners to develop an informed, effective, and responsible citizenry. It fosters development to resolve values and principles that enable a free society to exist. When learners make informed decisions, they can participate fully in political issues of the country. The political government is also able to deal with its political fundamental problems while it responds to political changing demands of people (or this development to work, political culture, authoritative structures, and political general processes must make certain changes. Hence Civic Education is linked to the political development of a nation (Dippell, 2004). Civic education empowers learners by teaching them that their voices and actions can have an impact on their communities and society at large. This sense of empowerment can boost self-confidence and encourage active participation in decision-making processes. The study also found that Civic education emphasizes the importance of ethical behavior and values such as justice, equality, and fairness. This can influence learners to make decisions that align with these principles and contribute to the betterment of society. Additionally, Civic Education can equip students with conflict resolution skills, which are essential for making decisions in interpersonal relationships and within communities. It helps learners understand how to address disputes peacefully and negotiate solutions. Civic Education promotes tolerance and inclusivity by exposing students to diverse perspectives and cultures. This can lead to more open-minded and inclusive decision-making, reducing prejudice and discrimination.



**Figure 2. Teachers' Responses on the Effects of Civic Education on Learners' Decision Making**

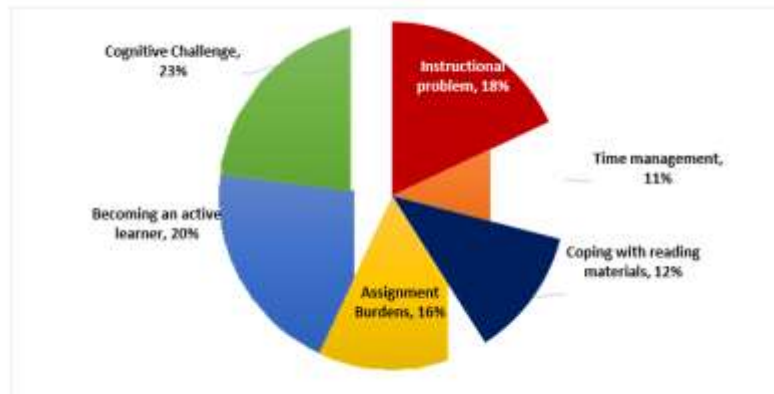
The figure below shows head teachers' responses on the effects of Civic Education on learners' decision making. From the findings, 50% of respondents indicated that Civic Education enhances competencies when making decisions. 25% stated that Civic Education increases learners' participation in solving issues affecting the country while the other 25% stated that Civic Education improves transparency in making decisions among learners. Peterson (2017) points out that for schools and other educational organizations, Civic Education helps to produce motivated and responsible learners, who relate positively to each other, to staff, and the surrounding community. For society, it helps to create an active and responsible citizenry, willing to participate in the life of the nation and the wider world and play its part in the democratic process. Civic Education fosters a sense of responsibility and a commitment to lifelong civic engagement. Learners are more likely to continue participating in civic activities, and making informed decisions throughout their lives. Education can take very different forms, including classroom-based learning, informal training, experiential learning, and mass media campaigns. Civic Education can be targeted at children or adults, at the local, national, or international level. The importance of good character of learners is paramount to the success of democracy and philanthropy (Mulenga, 2018). By engaging in civic responsibility, learners ensure and uphold certain values which include justice, freedom, equality, diversity, authority, privacy, due process, property, participation, truth, patriotism, human rights, and rule of law, tolerance, mutual assistance, self-restraint, and self-respect. Schools teach civic responsibility to learners to produce responsible citizens and active participants in community and government. The study found that Civic Education often includes media literacy, which helps students critically assess information sources and distinguish between reliable and biased information. This skill is crucial for making well-informed decisions in an era of information overload.



*Figure 3. Head Teachers' Responses on the Effects of Civic Education on Learners' Decision Making*

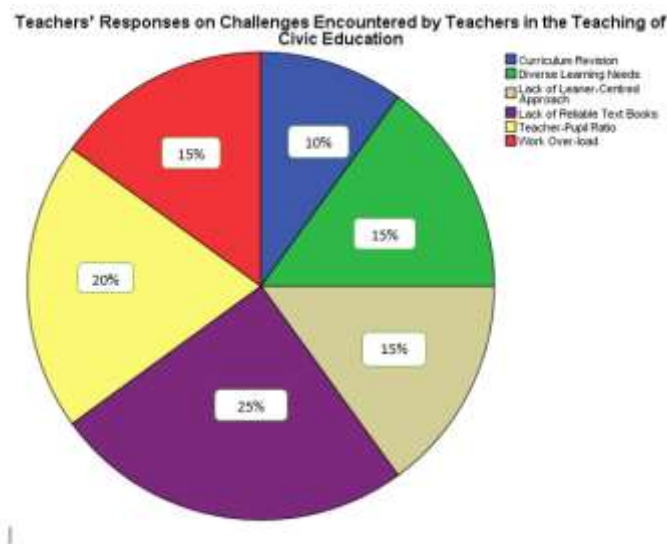
### 3.2. Challenges Encountered by Learners and Teachers of Civic Education

The second objective was to establish challenges encountered by learners in the learning of Civic Education in schools in Lusaka district. Data was collected using the questionnaire in the appendices as well as the interview schedule. According to the findings, 12% of respondents stated that coping with reading materials, 11% stated time management and 18% indicated instructional problems. Further, 20% stated becoming an active learner while 23% indicated cognitive challenges. The findings are presented in the following figure below. Pupils in FGDs were asked to mention the challenges which they faced as they learned Civic Education and they responded that learning materials in Civic Education were inadequate. This was seen as a challenge in the transmission of relevant knowledge, skills, and values needed to enhance democratic citizenship. In the first incident, learners stated the ambiguity of the syllabus provided by their instructor in a course. According to them, the instructor did not state his expectations clearly and deliver his lectures systematically. Furthermore, the feedback provided was also not clear, and the materials taught were not tested. They found that there was no way to improve their learning based on the feedback. In the second incident, learners stated that their classes were always disorganized, and the structure of the materials was not presented. Two of the learners interviewed suggested that they would rather have a better well-informed timetable than a volatile classroom situation. Furthermore, cognitive challenge is the most critical challenge faced by most of the learners in education (Mulenga and Kabombwe, 2019). A total of 32% of learners highlighted the issue of cognitive challenges in their learning. It can be understood that students' cognitive level should be developed at a higher level when they enter higher learning. When students are in university, they must think scholarly and write academically. Becoming an active learner was considered as a second critical challenge faced by most of the learners in school. A total of 23% claimed that it is not easy to become an active learner in the classroom. First of all, they need to prepare for the class to be active in the discussion. All the learners interviewed stated they need to spend at least 2 to 3 hours to prepare for a class; otherwise, they won't be able to participate in the classroom discussion. The scenario is the same for learners in other grades. They have to be self-motivated to monitor their learning so that they are more prepared in class. One of the teachers interviewed stated that the term "active learner" needs to be interpreted carefully. Active learning not only entailed active involvement in classroom discussions or activities but also meant learners' engagement in thinking and learning. If a learner has been attentively participating in a class but did not talk or say anything, he or she can still be considered an active learner. Hence, the meaning of active learner varies according to the interpretation of different personnel. The findings also indicated that active learning is not a magic solution in schools.



**Figure 4. Learners' Responses on Challenges Encountered by Learners in the Learning of Civic Education**

Figure 5 below shows teachers' responses to challenges encountered by teachers when teaching Civic Education in schools in Lusaka district. From the findings, 15% indicated that balancing diverse learning needs. 10% of respondents stated that revision on the curriculum, 15% indicated a lack of a learner-centered approach, and 20% indicated a teacher-pupil ratio. Further, 15% of respondents indicated work overload to plan for classes while 25% stated that lack reliable textbooks. Teachers interviewed indicated that Civic Education demanded active and participatory strategies. Additionally, the participants indicated that the teaching of Civic Education required teachers who were reflective to develop critical minds. Critical thinking is vital in Civic Education because it helps the learners in problem-solving. It was also noted from the findings that there was a need to harmonize the University/College curriculum with the secondary school curriculum to avoid a mismatch. This was seen as a way in which effective teaching could be actualized in secondary schools about the transmission of democratic citizenship ideals. Administrators and teachers identified three major challenges to learner-centered instruction: (1) Student mindsets. Making the switch from passive, teacher-directed learning to active, self-directed learning, (2) Adviser time. Juggling multiple demands from managing many learner projects and (3) Consistency across advisories. Ensuring consistent grading practices and achievement of mastery by learners. The findings of this study revealed that issues of teaching and learning materials in Civic Education were far from being resolved in secondary schools in Zambia. The teaching and learning materials were not adequate in some cases which posed a challenge in the transmission of the right knowledge, skills and values needed for democratic citizenship. Konopka et al (2017) state that a range of learning resources are used to support students in their learning process, among which textbooks are the most notable. Textbooks play an important role in almost any school system in the world, representing a useful resource for both teachers as course designers and students acquiring knowledge.



**Figure 5. Teachers' Responses on Challenges Encountered by Teachers in the Teaching of Civic Education**

### 3.3. Suggested Ways of Addressing the Challenges Encountered in the Teaching and Learning of Civic Education

The third objective was to suggest ways of addressing the challenges encountered in the teaching and learning of civic education in schools.

**Table 1. Ways of Addressing the Challenges Encountered in the Teaching and Learning of Civic Education in Schools. n=100**

<b>SN</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1.	Reduce enrollment to balance the teacher-pupil ratio	26	26%
2.	Teachers should use different teaching approaches to meet	20	20%
3.	Having well-equipped libraries in schools will help learners to access reading materials as well as providing teachers with	8	8%
4.	Teachers need to upgrade so that they catch up with the new	3	3%
5.	Teachers should ensure the classroom environment is favoring	18	18%
6.	Teachers should have high and consistent expectations so as to	7	7%
7.	Provide multiple opportunities for learners to take part in	18	18%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1 above shows suggested ways of addressing the challenges encountered in the teaching and learning of civic education in schools as suggested by participants. It was established that ways of addressing these challenges include: Reducing over enrollment to balance the teacher-pupil ratio (26%), and teachers should use different teaching approaches to meet different individual needs of learners (20%). Having well-equipped libraries in schools will help learners access reading materials as well as provide teachers with reliable textbooks (8%). Teachers need to upgrade so that they catch up with the new curriculum demands (3%). Teachers should ensure the classroom environment is favoring all learners so that they can become active learners (18%). Teachers should have high and consistent expectations to overcome the limitations of standardized testing (7%) and provide multiple opportunities for learners to take part in learning, this will help with learners' cognitive problems (18%).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In this study, an attempt was made to establish the effects of Civic Education on learner's decision making in secondary schools of Lusaka district, Zambia. The findings have shown significant results obtained from the open-ended section in the questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. Civic Education has a profound impact on learners' decision-making by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to participate in the democratic process, engage with societal issues, and make thoughtful, informed decisions that contribute to the betterment of their communities and society as a whole. The study further identified the challenges encountered by learners in the learning of Civic Education and teachers when teaching Civic Education in schools. The teaching of Civic Education in secondary schools in Zambia is marred with several challenges and teachers of Civic Education therefore are required to be resourceful and innovative during their teaching and learning sessions. The findings showed that the learners were concerned about instructional problems in their classes. Effective institutions are seen to employ collaborative approaches such as taking responsibility for the condition of learning, encouraging instructors to develop appropriate teaching strategies for learners, placing high but realistic expectations on learners, valuing learning outcomes consistent with discipline knowledge, having high levels of care for learners' welfare, and value creation or construction of new ideas.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are actions that should be taken based on the findings of this study:

- There is a need for secondary schools to strengthen Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities as a response to enhancing reflective teaching strategies in Civic Education.
- The Government through the Ministry of Education should ensure that schools have adequate resources to enhance teaching and learning in the classrooms.
- School administrators should encourage and monitor the use of a variety of active teaching methods and techniques to teach Civic Education.
- Teachers must provide meaningful interaction between learners and the subject content through the use of diverse teaching and learning activities.

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