

# Interrogating Civic Education Pedagogies that Stimulate Political Participation in Selected Secondary Schools in Zambia

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**Abstract:** The core focus of this study was to investigate the teaching pedagogies used in Civic Education in Zambian secondary schools and how they promote effective political participation. This study used a qualitative case study. 20 Civic Education teachers and 35 learners in Civic Education classes from 5 selected secondary schools in Lusaka District were purposively selected through homogenous sampling. One – on – one interview were used to collect data from teachers while focus group discussions were used to collect data from learners in Civic Education classes. Thematic data analysis method was used in this study. Findings established that teachers use lecture, debate, discussion, community engagement, education tour, and pupils' management boards in teaching Civic Education in secondary schools. Apart from the lecture method which depends on the teacher as the sole source of knowledge, the other methods are incorporated well in teaching Civic Education and have potential to promote effective political participation among secondary school learners. The study recommends that schools should strengthen Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities such as Lesson Study Circle, Cluster Meetings and Professional Subject Association Workshops to reinvigorate pedagogies of Civic Education and spur innovative pedagogical approaches that promote effective political participation; The Ministry of General Education should constantly hold educational conferences to sensitise Civic Education teachers on pedagogies that help to prepare learners for political participation as outline in the 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework; The Ministry of General Education and the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) should consider introducing community based assessment in Civic Education as part of final examination grading than current theoretical based approaches.

**Key Terms:** Civic Education, Teaching, Pedagogies and Political Participation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching of Civic Education, also known as Citizenship Education focuses on imparting civic knowledge, civic skills and civic dispositions in learners. This field of study aims at making citizens informed and actively involved in all avenues of their community. It is a vehicle that stirs citizens' interest to actively contribute to political undertakings of their community. Rightful pedagogies help ensure that these aspects are conveyed to learners in relation to political objective for the subject's existence. Laporte (2014) reveals

that implementing systemic changes by providing educational programs creates positive engagement in students through appropriate pedagogies ... may be a step in the direction that contributes to transforming and improving a learning community's practices. This entails that appropriate pedagogies will ensure that rightful training with defined objectives is extended to learners. Such teaching practices as observed by Stachowiak (2013) has potential to: influence like-minded decision makers to make policy changes; change incumbents in various positions of power; affect public opinion via mass media; alter decision maker behaviour through demonstrations or boycotts; or change perceptions about policies through research and information exchange. In turn, this increases the number of champions in a community, broaden partnership in sustainable development, instil the spirit of collaboration among community members, exacerbate political and public will.

The democratic goals of education are; liberty (which entails knowledge), opportunity (which necessitate skills) and mutual respect (which concern dispositions) among people (Sardoc, 2018). Citizens ought to know when and how to exercise their liberties, to put into appropriate practices knowledge learnt and to have self-conviction to actively take part in public decision making processes. Eurydice Report (2017) provides the first step towards understanding what Citizenship Education is, aimed at bridging the gap between the individual and the community. This gap can be addressed if citizens become informed, active and engaged in political, social, and other related issues of life through provision of relevant education (ACARA, 2012; Muleya, 2019a). In simplicity, the teaching of Civic Education globally provides learners with knowledge, impart skills and inculcate good values to learners which arouse their interest to actively take part in political affairs of their community.

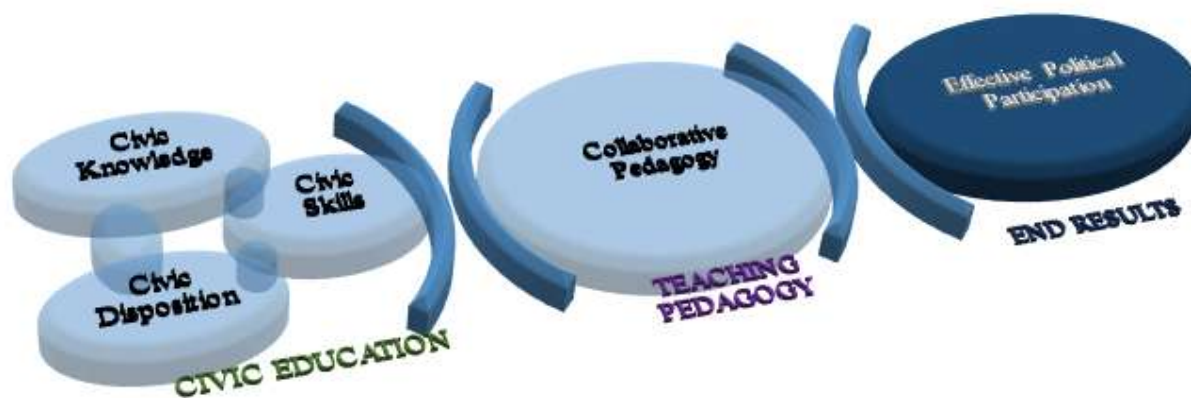
Teaching is generally characterized by the teacher giving lectures, explaining materials, and demonstrating experiments as the students take a passive role by listening, taking notes, and learning the contents of subject areas. Literature systematically provides documents with a variety of teaching techniques used in Civic Education in secondary schools. For example, teachers uses video presentations, debates,

facilitated panel discussions, teacher's exposition, role playing, simulation, field project and dramatizations to explain contentious issues like; the national debt, global warming, same-sex marriage, gun laws, and racial profiling (Guilfoile, et al., 2016; & McCowan, 2009). In a way, these can further be divided into: teacher-centered methods, learner-centered methods and teacher-learner interactive methods (Musonda, et al., 2020). For this reason, Pepper et al. (2003) advises teachers to provide an atmosphere of openness, trust, and honesty when teaching controversial subjects like Civic Education. When used in teaching Civic Education, these pedagogies can arouse the interest of individual learners to actively contribute to political affairs of their community. Magasu, et al. (2020: 1486) contend that the "best pedagogy in the teaching of Civic Education should include a combination of classroom instructions through which learners gain necessary foundational and professional skills, and experience and action on genuine community needs".

Therefore, pedagogies and contents for Civic Education must be integrated (Kennedy, 2012) to produce the subject's desired results according to set goals. Further, the Ministry of Education in Zambia requires teachers to use methods that encourage learners to reflect, think and do rather than reproduce from rote learning (MESVTEE, 2013). Such abilities are a facet of an informed and engaged citizen in public affairs. However, it is not clear on which among available pedagogical approaches in teaching Civic Education promote learners' political participation in a secondary schools.

#### *Conceptual Framework*

The study was guided by three elements of Civic Education which are civic knowledge, civic skills and civic disposition. These are discussed in relation to existing pedagogies that enhance learners' political participation in Zambian secondary schools.



The above clearly shows that teaching Civic Education is designed to instil civic knowledge, civic skills and civic dispositions into learners. Civic knowledge accords learners and opportunity to understand institutions of governance, appreciate their individual rights and responsibilities according to the constitution of the land. They become well informed citizens with common practices of their community. Civic skills are important in teaching Civic Education as they provide learners with critical thinking, analysing issues and formulating necessary opinions. Further, Civic Education is based on the change of individual mind-set for the common good of the community. Individual must have inner conviction to do ethically right things in community.

These expectations in teaching Civic Education can be achieved comprehensively with a lucid process leading to the end. The process must be accompanied by appropriate techniques for conveying such learning. This study proposes the use of collaborative or participatory teaching practices

where teaching Civic Education is done in partnership between the teacher, learners and the community. This is expected to expose learners to issues affecting their community and also to come up with appropriate ways of addressing such evils. Collaborative pedagogy enables learners to acquire knowledge (through research and from the teacher), skills (through participation in the decision making of their school) and disposition (as they will find it morally right to effectively participate in political affairs of their community). Therefore, collaborative teaching method is assumed to integrate civic knowledge, civic skills and civic dispositions or values to produce citizens who can effectively participate in political arenas of their community.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Meaning of Civic Education*

The meaning of Civic Education is fragile according to time, environment and orientation of the scholar. This makes it

complex to have a universal understanding of the subject in relation to its definitions, content and processes in which it can be delivered to learners. For instance, Civic and Citizenship Education in the view of Kennedy (2012: 122) is described as “a policy initiated by a government, a program run in a school, a lesson taught by a teacher or an activity experienced by a student”. This explanation tie the definition of Civic Education to a classroom situation where the government develop a curriculum in which Civic Education is one of its components. Once the policy (curriculum) is adopted, it is distributed into educational institutions (schools) where teachers implement it in classrooms. Other scholars however have their own understanding of this field of study as they do not make it vulnerable to a classroom situation, instead to wider media coverage where citizens are able to receive civic instructions. For instance, Branson and Quigley (1998) define Civic Education as education in self-government; Vasiljevic (2009) as a way of learning for effective participation in a democratic and development processes; and Piñguls (2015) as a basis for the formation of civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions for effective democratic participation. The debate of defining Civic Education remains contentious, because of the broad ranging descriptions and yet beyond these very broad definitions remains a huge range of competing and even contested definitions in the existing and new literature (Kuhn, 2006, Tovmasyan & Thoma, 2008; Eurydice Report, 2017; Muleya, 2015; 2018; 2019 in Mainde & Chola, 2020). This study refrain from making a position on which among existing definition is appropriate because of different needs that may exist in different areas globally. Our focus therefore is to interrogate pedagogies used in teaching Civic Education in Zambian secondary schools and how they promote learners’ effective political participation in the community.

#### *Anticipations in Civic Education*

Civic Education equip learners with knowledge; skills and values that enables them to practice their civic rights and perform duties as responsible Zambian citizens at local, national and international levels (MESVTEE, 2013). To this effect, the government of the Republic of Zambia has created various platforms for engagement to ensure government decision-making processes allow citizens to participate more in all avenues of the community (MNDP, 2017). This is to facilitate the accomplishment of the Zambia’s ‘Seventh National Development Plan 2017-2021’ through the teaching of Civic Education. However, this can only be actualised if there are appropriate pedagogies in teaching this subject.

The main focus of teaching Civic Education is to produce informed citizens who will actively participate in public affairs. Thus, McCowan (2009) describes Education for democratic citizenship as an instrument in the development of individuals for the realisation of their ability to be actors in the political sphere and also to be active rather than passive members of the community. Yet, the question of how this can be achieved is far from being straightforward. Therefore,

teaching Civic Education must engage ideal practices that will promote producing of well-informed citizens with civic knowledge, participatory skills and rightful dispositions necessary for effective political participation. According to Ciobanu (2018), participatory skills in real situations are the essence of any genuine education aiming to attain democracy. In this regard, every education system must arouse the interest of recipients to actively take part in political affairs of their community.

The learning of Civic Education takes place in a much broader environment than the school, and parents, friends, the media and civil society all play an important role in providing civic knowledge, civic competences and civic values (Kaumba, et al., 2020). These activities outside classroom environment makes learning real as learners incorporate theories learnt during classroom lessons into practice. Therefore, learners are expected to participate in schools’ core-curricular activities and also extend the services to the school’s immediate neighbourhood (MESVTEE, 2013). Learning institutions should expose learners to good governance practices by upholding democratic tendencies through the inclusion of activities and practices in programmes that promote good governance in line with Civic Education contents.

#### *Common Teaching Practices in Civic Education*

Literature presents dynamic styles invented and used in transmission of educational information from teachers to learners. Similarly, if the idea of citizenship is changing, it follows that ideas about civic and citizenship education should also be changing and the teaching methods must also evolve to meet the changing demands of Citizenship Education. It is important that teachers and teacher-educators use methods that promote active learners’ participation and interaction within and outside the school environment. The ministry of education in Zambia is also aware that teachers should use methods that encourage learners to reflect, think and do rather than reproduce from rote learning (MESVTEE, 2013). Such abilities are a facet of an informed and engaged citizen in public affairs. The prominent teaching methods used in teaching Civic Education includes; teacher-centered methods, learner-centered method and teacher-learner interactive method. Embedded into these methods are many other strategies that are used when teachers are delivering Civic Education lessons in classroom.

Teacher-Centered Methods involve teacher’s dissemination of information to learners. The teacher is the source of the information and learners’ role is to listen and follow what the teacher induces them with. According McCowan (2009), a teacher is involved either orally or through texts, transmitting knowledge to students about political institutions, current affairs and so forth. In this method, the teacher is the fulcrum of the learning environment, having a greater wealth of knowledge about the subject being taught, relative to students’ inexperience and lack of knowledge (Wright, 2011 in Moate & Cox, 2015: 381). Learners are regarded as objects which cannot generate knowledge; instead they are fed by the



teacher as the sole source of information. Munyaradzi (2013) accolades this method as it save time as the teacher controls the transmission and sharing of knowledge. It is the best practice to exert class control as Garrett (2008) observed that, when students exhibit undesirable behaviour, teacher-centered approach often rely on punishments, such as reprimands, frowns, time outs and loss of special privileges to bring the class to order. This saves time and make the lesson remain in rightful directions according to the teacher's projection.

However, this teaching practice has a number of shortcomings in teaching such subjects as Civic Education which requires collaborative involvement between the teacher and learners before, during and after the lesson. It does not apply activity based learning to encourage students to learn real life problems based on applied knowledge. It cannot be trusted as an instrument to producing learners who are actively engaged in political affairs of their community. According to Raja and Najmonnisa (2018), students' knowledge will not be useful unless they understand that it is vital to realize why, when and how various skills and concepts are relevant. This can be actualised if the teacher involves learners during lesson delivery in class. Therefore, this study challenge the use of teacher-centered method in teaching Civic Education as it does not promote teacher-learner engagement which is a basis for training well informed and engaged learners.

Another teaching method which teachers use in Civic Education is 'Learner-Centered Method'. It is noted that, "most teachers today apply the student-centered approach to promote interest, analytical research, critical thinking and enjoyment among students" (Hesson & Shad, 2007, in Munyaradzi, 2013: 30). This teaching method is regarded most effective since it does not centralize the flow of information from the teacher to the learners, instead learners play a pivotal role during the learning process. As a result, it motivates goal-orientated behaviour among pupils to engage into research which focuses on current issues in their local communities, country and the world, and also attempt to come up with feasible solutions. According to Guilfoile, et al. (2016), learners share what they learn in a various ways such as video presentations, debates, facilitated panel discussions and dramatizations. Among such contentious topics which learner may engage into using this method includes: the national debt, global warming, same-sex marriage, gun laws, racial profiling, immigration/border control, social security, and the list goes on.

This method allows learners to air their voices on such controversial topics, thereby protecting teachers' opinion which maybe opposed to the common consensus of the class and the community as a whole. However, the teacher do not completely free from stating the optimal standing of the topic as he or she guides the class in relation to lesson objectives and also in creating favourable environment for effective lesson delivery. The role of the teacher is to moderate pupils' engagement during the lesson so that, balanced views are presented and the position of the lesson remain in a clear

direction. If used appropriate in teaching Civic Education, this method has a potential to embolden political participation among learners within and outside school environment. This study aimed to investigate how this teaching strategy used in Civic Education in Zambian secondary schools promotes learners' political participation in the community.

Collaborative or Teacher-Student Interactive or Participatory Method is another strategy used by teachers to deliver lesson contents schools. This method combines the other two foregone pedagogies. According to Munyaradzi (2013: 30) collaborative teaching method "applies the strategies used by both teacher-centered and student-centered approaches". A Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire uses phrase 'conscientization' in reference to collaborative teaching method which can only be achieved through a dialogical encounter, where the student and the teacher is fully involved in the educational process (Freire, 1972, in McCowan, 2009). He emphasizes that education must begin from learners' own experience of the world, since only by starting from this situation can they begin to move to abstract concepts of situations. Collaborative method integrate such teaching techniques which include among others: group work, the project method, role playing, ...questions and Bloom's Taxonomy, questions as embedded world views, ... lecture-discussion and field trips (McCowan, 2009). These methods can be used in different situations and the teacher decide which one is appropriate according to prevailing environment and lesson content to be presented. In this method, both learners and teachers are actively engaged during lesson time.

Further, Halstead and Pike (2006) argue that the methods and strategies most likely to be successful in achieving educational aims take place inside or outside the school environment. Within the school, students may be encouraged to work co-operatively towards developing a democratic ethos in the school. For instance, within the school environment, school councils may be set up, students may be involved in making rules at class or school level or in other forms of democratic decision-making: while outside the school, students may be involved in various forms of community service and charitable work, environmental action and other kinds of voluntary activities. This helps to train well informed and engaged citizens within and outside parameter of the community.

This kind of learning has a potential to create an environment where learners can actively engage themselves while working with their teachers or other community experts to identify problems community face and try to find sustainable solution collaboratively. In McCowan (2009), 'Simulation' method create a real-life practical situation where schools can stage contexts for participation, such as elections, trials and parliaments, in which the procedures are as close to reality as possible to community practices. According to Mechouat (2017: 262), "simulations and role play can be used as effective techniques to increase students' abilities to debate analytically and think critically, which will, undoubtedly, help

students develop skills and competences that are applicable in real life situations and coursework". This method instil the spirit of commitment in learners as they feel to be part of the learning process, hence not only giving them civic knowledge, but also imparting them with civic skills and dispositions which are a key for political participation in the community.

Participatory method has a number of benefits in teaching Civic Education if used effectively in Zambian secondary schools. According to Gayford (2003) and Cuenca (2010), it places the value on the experience of participants as practitioners, to help them to work collaboratively with colleagues and to make them feel empowered by the process. It has a potential to make learners to remember subject information better than if the same information was presented through teacher-centered (lecture) method. This is because students are encouraged to search relevant knowledge guided by the teacher, hence improving learners' academic performance (ACARA, 2016 & Munyaradzi, 2013). This method has a potential to promote learners' political participation in community as it empower them with necessary knowledge, skills and values which they need for such endeavours. Therefore, this study interrogated how teacher-learner method stimulates learners' interest to actively participate in political affairs of their community.

### III. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This study used qualitative research methodology. Haradhan (2018) describes qualitative research as a form of social action that stresses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences to understand the social reality. In qualitative research, researchers are interested in people's belief, experience, and meanings from the perspective of the people. According to Shakouri (2014), qualitative research is a means to empower individuals to share their stories and hear their voices in a study the researcher is interested in. In this instance, a qualitative research was appropriate as teachers of Civic Education in selected secondary schools in Lusaka district of Lusaka province brought out multiple experiences, shared their stories and provided meanings on how teaching pedagogies used in teaching Civic Education facilitate effective political participation of learners in communities.

In addition, the study used a descriptive case study design where the researchers explored in-depth pedagogical strategies in Civic Education in relation to arousing learners' interest for political participation. According to Zainal (2007), the case study method selects a small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals as the subjects of study to describe the natural phenomena which occur within the data in question. Here, the structure of a case study included the problem, the context, the issues and the lessons learned (Creswell, 2014). In this study, case study method enabled researchers to closely examine the data within a specific context of pedagogical approaches used in Civic Education in Zambian secondary schools and how they stimulate learners' interest for political participation.

#### *Population and Sampling*

This study targeted trained Civic Education teachers and pupils in Civic Education classes in the selected secondary schools in Lusaka District of Lusaka Province with focus to investigate teaching methods used in teaching Civic Education and they stimulate learners' interest actively participate in political affairs of their communities.

55 respondents were purposively selected through homogeneity sampling (involves individuals, groups, or settings because they all possess similar characteristics or attributes (Kothari, 2004: 55; Omona, 2013; Majid, et al, 2018)), out of which 35 were learners in Civic Education classes and 20 were trained teachers in Civic Education. Teachers explained how teaching strategies they use in Civic Education promote political participation of learners; while learners in Civic Education classes gave their views on how they learn Civic Education in relation to political participation.

#### *Data Collection Techniques*

In this study, secondary data was collected and heavily relied on recent journal articles, academic books and internet sites whose contents are in line with Civic Education, teaching methods and political participation (Ranjit, 2005; Kombo and Tromp, 2006; Walliman, 2011). Meanwhile, primary data hinged on views from teachers of Civic Education which were collected using one-on-one interviews while focus group discussions were used with pupils. Teachers' and learners' observations, experiences and recommendations on how the teaching methods used in Civic Education promote effective political participation made primary data of this study.

#### *Data Analysis*

This study used thematic data analysis where themes are topics or major subjects that come up in discussions (Yin, 2003; Kombo and Tromp, 2006; Haradhan, 2018). Thematic data analysis compels the researcher to select wording of the theme in a way that accurately represents the meaning of the responses categorized under a theme. In the view of Salleha, et al. (2017), thematic data analysis is an established method of organising qualitative data by identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. The data from both one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions was collected, transcribed and coded into themes and sub-themes that emerged during data collection. This was done by carefully listening to the recorded conversations in order to interpret, reduce and code key responses into major and sub-themes in relation with the research purpose. Teachers defended that the teaching methods they use promote effective political participation while learners from the selected schools gave different views on how they learn Civic Education in school in relation to political participation.

### *Ethical Issues*

In this study, respondents' names are not mentioned; instead category coding will be used in place of their actual social names. Teachers' names will be coded as T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>2</sub>, while learners from focus group discussion will be coded as FGD<sub>1</sub>, FGD<sub>2</sub>,.... Before conducting the interview, an informed consent was sought from the informants and the researcher guaranteed them with security of the information provided. After the objective of the research was stated, respondents agreed to be interviewed and willingly to share their experiences on how the teaching methods used in Civic Education promotes effective political participation (Akaranga and Makau, 2016; Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011). The researchers' made recordings were used only for the purpose of validation through counter checking of written data to what the respondent said, hence not available for public use.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *Civic Education Pedagogies that Stimulates Political Participation in Selected Secondary Schools in Zambia*

This study established that some methods used in teaching Civic Education promote acquisition of knowledge, skills and good values which are a key for effective political participation of learners in communities. Teaching methods identified includes: lecture method, debate method, discussion method, education tour, community engagement, and pupils' management boards.

#### *Lecture Method*

All the 20 teachers of Civic Education interviewed acknowledged the use of lecture method during lesson delivery. For instance, T<sub>1</sub> explained,

*"I normally use lecture method where I stand before the pupils in class and explain the lesson of the day. It helps me to cover a lot of work in a shorter space of time and thereafter I give the class an exercise or the homework to do depending on the time remaining after I finish my lesson presentation".*

Lecture method of teaching helps teachers to cover a lot of work in short period of time. This pedagogy makes oppressive learning as the teacher claim to be the only source of information as they run through the lesson (Macedo, 2012). It is the easiest method as it does not promote disturbances when teaching senior secondary school pupils because the teacher retains full control of the classroom and its activities, hence it also save time. Munyaradzi (2013) accolades this method that it saves time as the teacher controls the transmission and sharing of knowledge. During lesson delivery time, the teacher has power to direct the class according to the days' task.

When asked the methods used in learning Civic Education, interviewed learners from Civic Education classes in all panels also mentioned lecture as the common method used by

their teachers to teach Civic Education. Views from FGD<sub>1</sub> indicates,

*"... the teacher do not give us time to interact during the lesson. The only time we interact is when our teacher gives us an exercise or homework. She explains everything and write notes on the board especially if she is annoyed".*

This method is used by some teachers who go to class infuriated and start teaching without giving learners a room to interact during the lesson. Safapour, et al. (2019) supported that students taught through lecture method commonly spend most of their time learning from lectures given by instructors in the classroom, working on assignments, and solving problems at home. Thus, the method does not promote effective engagement between the teacher and the learner as teachers prefer it to exert class control. Confirming the aforementioned, Mpho (2016: 12) argued that lecturer method "does not allow students to express themselves, ask questions and direct their own learning". Teacher's dominance during learning and teaching process deny learners opportunity to attain their goals through construction of educational knowledge on their own. This adversely affect promoting learners' political participation especially when using medium like Civic Education in schools.

#### *Debate Method*

Findings emanating from the study seem to confirm with Mpho's (2016) study where students are more interested in learning activities when they can interact with one another and participate actively in their learning. Debate method was emphasised as one of the common methods used to stimulate learners' political participation in teaching Civic Education in secondary schools. For example, T<sub>2</sub> narrated that,

*"I also use debate method in order to collect views of the learners on certain topics. In this way, learners present their arguments logically and with confidence. My role is to moderate the debate and to give a conclusion of the lesson in relation to my lesson objectives".*

The debate method requires the teacher to divide the learners into two groups, give them a topic to research in advance and also direct them according to the lesson objectives. In this way, learners are able to engage during the lesson and develop interest in researching and public speaking, hence helping them to effectively participate in political fields of their community when required by the constitutional provisions. As they logically present their arguments, debate method helps learners to acquire analytical, research, organisational and public speaking skills while still in school. As learners do research, Kamp (2011) observed that it enhances participation and interaction as well as helping them to get to know each other better, build relationships and learn to cooperate and practice their skills. As they are researching on what to debate, they are made to work together and build long-life



friendship. Opposing views from their opponent help them to become critical thinkers while tolerating each other's viewpoint which is one of traits for effective political participation in a democratic society.

#### *Discussion Method*

This study established that a discussion method is one of the methods used by teachers to teach Civic Education lessons. From a focus group interview, learners acknowledged being exposed to such method during Civic Education lessons. Collected views from FGD<sub>2</sub> indicates,

*“Sometimes our teacher gives us questions to discuss in groups and then one from the group presents before the class...”*

This method help learners to learn from other learners during group discussion, hence creating an opportunity for them to acquire more from classmates than depending on the teacher as a sole provider of information. Tokarcikova and Kucharcikova (2016) point out that discussion method is a shift from a belief that learners are empty plate who are supposed to be imparted with knowledge (teach concept) to a belief that learners can construct knowledge and learn on their own if properly guided (learn concept). Conducive learning environment created by the teacher accord learners chance to bring out their arguments of the topic at hand, in turn offers the teacher an opportunity to learn diverse views from learners' perspectives. In this way, learners are trained to be public speakers which are a key to political participation.

Another voice came from teachers of Civic Education where it was established that discussion method is the best method in teaching Civic Education as it help the teacher to learn from the children what he or she may not be aware. Representing others, T<sub>3</sub> narrates,

*“I use discussion method during my lessons... I put learners in groups and give them different questions which they will present before the class.... At times, I use class discussion where the whole class is involved during my lesson...”*

Discussion method put learners at the centre of learning and teaching process, while the teacher assume the role of the facilitator. Ndirangu (2006) contends that the role of the teacher during lesson delivery is to provide guidance as a facilitator by giving students challenges that will help to correct their misconceptions and enable them to draw correct concepts. In Civic Education, topics like political participation, violation of human rights, and other sensitive topics are better taught through discussion method. The teacher may not be a sole source of information especially on contemporary matters. Involving learners during class lesson promote the spirit of collaborative learning where the information is exchanged from the teacher to the learners and vice versa. In view of this, McCowan (2009) posits that the discussion method allow students to state their views and modify them in the light of those of others. Learners will have

free conscience to engage the authority (teacher) on matters that may affect their wellbeing in the school environment once they are engaged in the learning process. Therefore, the learning environment must be conducive especially during lessons delivery in subjects like Civic Education which require total participation of learners and teachers.

#### *Education Tours*

Findings further revealed that the best method in teaching Civic Education is through the incorporation of education tours to government institutions. This method was highlighted by most of the participants as an ideal method, although not often used due to financial limitations and time consuming. As observed by Ciobanu (2018), education tour (participatory) method is not easy to organise as teachers find it difficult to take learners to public institutions where they can learn more from expert point of view because of stalwart school managers who always tell them to use other options in making learners understand such topic than spending money into such expeditions. According to T<sub>4</sub>,

*“...I always want to take my learners to public institutions such as courts, parliament, state house, and a bank so that they can interact with experts in such topics, but I am always told there is no money in the school”.*

Interestingly, conducting educational tours with defined objectives is encouraged even in the national educational policy (MESVTEE, 2013) as one of the best practices for lesson delivery. This method exposes learners to the actual content which they cover in the classroom. In a related scenario, MOE (2001) also maintained this method as it enables pupils to gain first-hand information and become familiar with materials and phenomena in their natural relationship.

Interviewed learners expressed interest in learning Civic Education by visiting public institutions as lesson topic demands. From FGD<sub>4</sub>, it was narrated that,

*“we can learn Civic Education by going to parliament, courts and state house...but we only went to parliament when we were in grade 10, and now we are in grade 12. So teachers should be taking their pupils to such institutions so that us pupils can get first-hand information and ask those people working from there what we need to know”.*

Taking pupils to public institutions for learning Civic Education has a lot of benefits to them. It arouses their interest learn Civic Education, stimulates active involvement in the teaching task, promote cooperative learning, provides an interactive approach to teaching-learning-evaluation, stimulates the initiative, ensures better implementation of knowledge, skills and abilities and also exposes them to see things in reality as opposed to classroom confinement (Ciobanu, 2018). Further, Mainde (2018) explained that teachers for Civic Education should be organising education

tours to the National assembly, Cabinet, Judiciary and other autonomous government departments such as Anti-Corruption Commission offices, Drug Enforcements Commission offices, and Electoral Commission of Zambia, so that learners see what they learn in classroom situation in reality. Conducting educational tours also exposes learners into new information which they might not have covered during the time for lesson delivery. In this way, the teacher will learn this new information just as the learners do.

#### *Field Project and Community Engagement*

Civic Education can be taught through giving learners field work which they research from their community. This method promotes collaborative learning through involving learners to get learning content from the community in which they come from. T<sub>1</sub>, T<sub>3</sub> and T<sub>5</sub> explained,

*“...also field project or community engagement is one of the reliable method recommended in teaching Civic Education as it encourages interactive learning between teacher and learners”.*

The findings here confer with Mpho's (2016) study in encouraging teachers to provide access and equal quality education for everyone by using approaches (such as field work) that are learner centered in order to enable all learners to participate in their learning as much as it is feasible. The role of the teacher in this method is to edify such information to suit the learning objectives of a given lesson. Magasu, et. al, (2020) also explained that the best pedagogy in teaching Civic Education should include a combination of classroom instruction through which learners gained the necessary foundational and professional skills, and experience and action on genuine community needs. However, most teachers do not actualised this method in teaching Civic Education citing the long process it takes to conclude the lesson. Teachers opt for easy lecture method or any other classroom oriented practice in delivering Civic Education lessons.

At another school, a Civic Education teacher (T<sub>9</sub>) was asked how often he uses the community engagement method in teaching Civic Education lessons. This is what he said;

*“I cannot remember when I last used it, apart from the time I was doing my school experience. ... I see it to be time consuming in preparing questions or topics for learners, waiting and marking the responses from the community and again going back to teach ...that's why I prefer lecturer method or any other classroom method”.*

Although the field project method of teaching consumes time for teachers, it is the best method as it accords full coverage of Civic Education lesson especially when dealing with controversial topics that require community views. The lesson may not be complete if community members are left out in some Civic Education lessons. It is even worse if the teacher depends on written textbooks to deliver content in such complex contemporary topics. This approach incorporates

both theory and practice. The Ministry of General Education also encourages the use of action projects or field work component in teaching Civic Education as it provides learners with an opportunity to acquire research, analysis, evaluation and report skills (MESVTEE, 2013).

Findings further reveals that field work accord learners an opportunity to take class lessons into the community where they come from. This is indorsed by Abdelmalak and Trespalacios (2013) where learner-centered (field work) approaches emphasize the importance of creating learning opportunities that improve students' learning through individual discovery of knowledge. From FGD<sub>5</sub>, it was noted that,

*“field work help us to take what we learn in class to community we come from. We are able to identify problems our community is faced with and also come up with solutions to these problems”*

The teacher prepares a set of questions on themes which are given to learners to research in the community and submit their findings as preferred by the teacher. The use of field work gives students an opportunity to interact with the actual environment or object learnt during classroom lesson delivery. This involvement of learners in identifying the problems as well as finding solutions to challenges trains them for future community involvement.

Another scenario where community engagement can be done is when the teacher takes the learners into the community to conduct community service in relation to the topic learnt. Civic Education topics like 'environmental education', can best be learnt using community engagement as the teacher or learners can identify a learning field where they go and clean as part of their lesson. One of the teachers of Civic Education (T<sub>7</sub>) narrated,

*“I take my class to nearby place in relation to class lesson as it does not require any money. For instance, when I am teaching on 'land degradation' to grade 12 class, I always take them outside near the cabbage so that they can see the impact of such heaped dirt to the environment and also engage in cleaning the surrounding community”.*

This kind of involvement prepares learners for future participation not only in such activities, but also other related matters such as political engagement. Mainde (2018) re-echoes the importance of this engagement where a teacher takes pupils outside a classroom environment to see how environmental degradation affects a community. In this way, pupils become agents of cleanness in any given environment. Learners become aware that they are part of a community, hence the need to actively participate in all avenues of life. This is one of the cheapest and reliable methods in teaching Civic Education. It does not require transport as this service can be provided within the locality of a school. Other scholars in recent past also echoed that community engagement has



gained recognition as a curricular strategy for preparing student for their professional roles, changing the way faculty teach, changing the way educational programs relate to their communities, enabling community organizations and community members to play significant roles in education institutions (Chola, 2016; Muleya, 2015).

#### *Pupils Management Boards*

Findings emanating from the study seem to confirm with other scholars that pupils management boards (school councils) provides political awareness and learning about democracy through experiencing it in school's decision making process (Keogh & Whyte, 2005); improve flow of information in their schools and reduce tensions which might result into student unrests (Mboyonga, 2018). This method received accolades from both teachers of Civic Education and learners in the Civic Education class as the most reliable formula for training learners for effective political participation in community. From Civic Education teachers, T<sub>8</sub> explained that,

*"... Here, they carry out the roles of community leaders and the procedure involved is similar to what happens in the social world".*

Student boards are such avenues available to train learners for political participation in future. McCowan (2009) explained such methods in the contexts for effective participation, in which the procedures are as close to reality as possible. The pupils learn through engaging themselves in such activities in school which are direct transcending to what the community practice. The process of electing members of pupils' council through a secret ballot is what the community practice when they want to choose their representatives in a democratic society.

On the other hand, learners bemoaned lack of their involvement during decision making process especially when selecting their representatives like prefects. Learners from FGD<sub>3</sub> lamented that:

*"...we are not involved in choosing our leaders in the school which is different from what we learn in Civic Education under good governance...our school is run under a dictatorship kind of governance"*

Such practices are repressive and tyrannical which impede the actualisation of the main focus of Civic Education for preparation of a well informed and engaged citizen in public affairs. There must be a platform where voices of learners are heard in the management of the school as they are a reason for the existence of schools. Lack of differentiating between prefectural board and pupils' representative council in this context implies that teachers of Civic Education at this school have not provided information to learners which can stimulate their level of involvement in school administration.

Elsewhere, FGD<sub>5</sub> acknowledged the role of Civic Education in preparing pupils for political participation in school through pupils' representative council. It was said that:

*"...at our school, we have school council where learners contest for positions while others participate in electing their representatives... we tell council members our problems and they present them to school administration on our behalf sir just as it is done in the society".*

The learner participants noted that they have opportunities to engage with school management in decision making process of their school through student councils where they take a direct role to contest and elect their representatives. Similarly, Abdelmalak and Trespalacios (2013) contended that involving students in making decisions process gives them a sense of ownership and responsibility in the community. The use of pupils' management board in preparing learners for political participation through Civic Education is permeated with the whole tenants of democratic governance. An 'open classroom climate' within classrooms and the use of School Parliaments involving students are two processes that have been found to be positively related to students' participatory learning (Kennedy, 2012). Existence of school council alongside prefectural board creates an environment for effective political participation among pupils just as the actual community practice.

#### V. CONCLUSION

This study investigated pedagogies used in teaching Civic Education in Zambian secondary schools and how they promote learners' political participation in communities. A case study design was used to collect qualitative data from teachers and pupils of Civic Education on how the teaching pedagogies used in teaching Civic Education promote learners' political participation in communities. It was established that teachers use lecture, debate, discussion, education tour, community engagement, and pupils' management boards in teaching Civic Education in secondary schools. Findings point to the fact that if incorporated well in teaching Civic Education, these methods have potential to promote learners' effective political participation in the community. This study has a significant influence as it reminds teachers to use pedagogies that make learners partners in the teaching-learning process, for example according them opportunities to make lesson presentations and discover own knowledge through research. Doing so promotes effective political participation in them.

#### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Schools should strengthen local Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities such as Lesson Study Circle, Cluster Meetings and Professional Subject Association Workshops to reinvigorate Civic Education teachers with new pedagogical approaches that promote effective political participation in the community.
- ii. The Ministry of General Education should constantly call for educational conferences to sensitise Civic Education teachers on teaching pedagogies that help

to prepare learners for effective political participation as outline in the 2013 Zambia education curriculum framework.

- iii. The Ministry of General Education through Curriculum Development Center should consider introduction of school based assessment (SBA) in Civic Education syllabus as part of final examination grade than current theoretical based assessment.

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