

Efficacy of Civic Education in Promoting Social-Cultural Values among Youths in Zambia: A Case of Mbala District, Northern Province

Musonda Francis¹, Magasu Oliver^{2*}, Mwamba Thomas³, Kanyantila George⁴, Nkole Catherine⁵

^{1,3,4,5}St. Mary's College of Education, Mbala.

²Kwame Nkrumah University, Kabwe.

*Correspondence Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8110101>

Received: 28 October 2024; Accepted: 03 November 2024; Published: 06 December 2024

ABSTRACT

Zambia is faced with a number of challenges in relation to social – cultural; with their dire consequences. These challenges maybe attribute to lack of adequate social-cultural values among citizenry and in particular the youths. Drawing qualitative data from Musonda's (2024) study entitled "Potency of Civic Education in promoting civility among youths in Zambia," the article specifically focuses on efficacy of Civic Education in promoting social-cultural values among youths in Zambia, in particular Mbala District of Northern Province. A qualitative research approach was employed coupled with a descriptive design. Purposive sampling procedure was employed; focus group discussion and structured interview were used as research instruments. The researcher used thematic analysis method complimented by in-depth explanations presented in narrative form as obtained from the participants, summarizing of key findings as well as the interpretations. The study established that Civic Education enhances social-cultural values by inculcating youths with knowledge about the society, empowering youths with well-informed mind thereby making sound decisions, fostering good character and substantive knowledge, increased awareness, enhanced civic engagement, political tolerance, cultural diversity among others. On the other hand, the study found that some youths portrayed delinquency behaviour attributed to lack of awareness on civic issues due to limited access to information, ineffective communication and inadequate institutions that provide Civic Education.

Keywords: Civic Education, efficacy, social-cultural values, youth

INTRODUCTION

The history of Civic Education in Zambia can be traced as far back as the colonial era or before Zambia's independence, when it was embedded into political education. After Zambia's independence during the second republic to be specific in 1978 it was abolished to be taught in schools by the then President Dr. Kenneth Kaunda. The reason for its abolition was that the then political leaders in government never wanted the general citizenry to be civically knowledgeable; the politicians thought that the civility of citizens politically could lead people to rise against the government. By then Zambia was under one party-state which was considered to be a dictatorship type of government. Nonetheless, it is important to note that Civic Education was included in Zambia's educational core curriculum, particularly in the education reforms of 1977, while at junior secondary school level civics was offered (MoE, 1996).

Later, the Zambian education system through the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) introduced and incorporated the teaching and learning of Civic Education as a subject in 2003 at senior secondary school level (Chondoka, et al. 2010). This subject covers a wide range of topics that include; The Republican Constitution,

Governance Systems in Zambia, Human Rights, Cultural Studies, Social Challenges, Zambia's Legal Systems, Gender Equity and Equality, Environmental Education, Global issues and Family life in Zambia. The multifaceted of topics found in Civic Education makes the subject to be contestable in nature. This was noted by Muleya (2017:125-147) that, Civic Education is a contested field with intense discussions about its goals and what teaching and learning processes should be privileged. Under the 2013 revised curriculum Civic Education was made a compulsory subject in all senior secondary schools (MoE, 2013).

The rationale for the introduction of Civic Education was that teaching and learning of Civic Education would help school leavers gain civic knowledge, skills and dispositions that would make them understand civic issues in the society, inculcation of social-cultural values inclusive. A number of studies have been conducted on various issues surrounding Civic Education in Zambia. However, few or none of the studies have been conducted on efficacy of Civic Education in inculcation of social-cultural values among youths in Zambia, to be specific Mbala District. Thus, the knowledge on efficacy of Civic Education in inculcating social-cultural values among youths in Zambia still remains unclear in the academic circle. Therefore, the researcher undertook a study to enhance proper understanding on efficacy of Civic Education in prompting social-cultural values among youths in Zambia. The study was undertaken in Mbala district of Northern Province.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding Civic Education

The concept of 'Civic Education' is holistic and many-sided in nature, the reason being that it looks at all society endeavours in relation to social, political economic and sustainable issues among others. This has made the definition of Civic Education to be contentious, thus it has been defined differently by different scholars and schools of thought. Strandbrink (2017:65) defines Civic Education in terms of normatively that transcend 'culture' altogether in favour of secularist and neutralist patterns. This means that Civic Education allocate an educational and formative role to a number of civic institutions, not just to schooling in the formal education system.

Civic Education is seen by Peterson (2011), to be a discipline with formative attempt to teach knowledge, skills and dispositions required for citizenship. Muleya (2018) also noted that, Civic Education is characterised by different dimensions such as citizenship education orientations, content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, resources, pedagogical approaches or practices, context in which it takes place as well as the people that get to interact with its assumptions. Giddens and Sutton (2010) consider Civic education as the process of inculcating the basic ethics, ethos and mores into the learners to be good citizens that will exercise their rights and duties and respect others. In essence, civic education is a life-shaping form of education which aims at preparing and inculcating in individuals' societal values and norms to be responsible citizens in the society.

Therefore, one gets the sense that in trying to understand what Civic Education is, it is important to appreciate the fact that it is not only centred around information about citizenship, governance, democracy, human rights but also learning from individuals' interactions, dialogue and performance of action within their different social, economic, political and cultural settings (Muleya, 2015).

Social-Cultural Values

To start with, Marshall (1998) avers that society requires some degree of homogeneity and consistency in the values held by people, providing a common fund of shared values which shape social and political consensus. Social and cultural values are generalized standards and principles of what the individuals in a society consider good or desirable. Societal values are products of the cultural life and so, are learnt like any other cultural trait. Social values are good manners and civilized behaviour (Snow, 2020). It extends from self-control to mediation and consolation. A society that is peaceful and caring will have members who pay attention to the feelings and thoughts of other members within the group. Social and cultural values form an important part of the culture of the society (Kardiyat, 2014).

Values account for the stability of social order. Values are the criteria people use in assessing their daily lives, arrange their priorities and choose between alternative course of action (Snow, 2020). Values, such as fundamental rights, patriotism, respect for human dignity, rationality, sacrifice equality, democracy among other, guide one's behaviour in many ways (Rosenfeld,2019). In simple terms, social values are described as measures of goodness or desirability. However, it saddens one's heart to hear and read in pages of newspapers that these leaders of tomorrow engage in all forms of social evils in and around school settings and even engage one another in confrontations, fighting and bullying and parading dangerous weapons and charms to inflict injuries on their peers, destroying school properties and public utilities in towns and cities (Carole, 2015).

Further, Kardiyat (2014) found in the study conducted from Indonesia that Civic Education brings the students to become scientists and professionals who have a sense of nationalism and love for the country, democratic, and become citizens who have competitiveness; disciplined, actively participate in building a peaceful life based on the Pancasila value system. In addition, civic education can foster good moral values for students, so that they are independent, able to sort out, which are positive and negative. However, Kardiyat is study was conducted in Indonesia, but this study was conducted in Zambia, additionally, more so the Indonesian study paid no attention to the efficacy of Civic Education in relation to social-cultural values. Thus, it was pertinent to investigate the efficacy of Civic Education in the promotion of social-cultural values among Zambian youths.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

The study was a qualitative based research. The justification for the use of qualitative approach in this study was that it dug deeper and collected numerous forms of data and examine them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation. According to Kothari (2004) a research design stands for advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in the analysis keeping in view the objective of the study. In this study a descriptive research design was used. A descriptive study is one that is focused and detailed, in which propositions and questions about a phenomenon are carefully scrutinized and articulated at the outset.

Study Sample Size Sampling Techniques

Creswell (2012:627) defines a sample as “a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for the purpose of making generalizations about the target population.” A sample of thirty (30) participants was used which comprised of eight (8) Civic Education teachers, eight (8) senior citizens and fourteen (14) youths. The researcher opted to use a smaller sample size in order to reduce on the cost and time required to write the research report. In this study, the participants were selected purposively. Brynam (2008:418) stated that, “The goal of purposive sampling is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed.” Purposive sampling was employed in coming up with all the participants.

Data Collection Instruments

In order to gather data for this study, the researcher employed semi structured interview guides and focused group discussions as instruments. The use of these instruments provided the researcher to collect valid and reliable data. A gap in one of the research instruments was supplemented by the other research instrument.

Data Collection Procedure and Data Analysis

The procedure for collecting data for this study was as follows; the researcher started by getting permission to carry out research. Thereafter, the researcher got permission from the participants through signing on the

consent form. Then the interviews and focus group discussions took place and through that data collection was done. In qualitative research, like this study, according to Orodho and Kombo (2002) the researcher needs to decide how the information is to be analysed once collected before going to the field. In a qualitative research, data analysis can also be done by means of 'thematic method'. Thematic analysis entails analysis of major themes or topics that come up in discussion. Therefore, the researcher employed thematic analysis method complimented by in-depth explanations presented in narrative form as obtained from the informants, summarizing of key findings as well as the interpretations and conclusion of the data collected.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The major intention of this study was to establish the efficacy of Civic Education in promoting social-cultural values in Zambia. When the question was asked and the question was; 'What is the efficacy of Civic Education in promoting social cultural values among youths in Mbala District, Zambia? The following themes emerged; tolerance and social engagement, morality such as respect, good family health practices and ineffectiveness of Civic Education in promoting social-cultural values

1. Tolerance and Social Engagement

During data collection, it was revealed that Civic Education plays a pivotal role in inculcating moral values or acceptable behaviour in Zambian communities. During interviews one of the Civic Education teachers responded that,

"Civic Education has positively impacted good values in some youths because I observe some of them to have social analytical knowledge and skills. I see some sense of being informed citizens, who are civically engaged with trust, and tolerance."

As evidenced from the above verbatim, Civic Education is promoting social-cultural in Zambian youths by imparting them with social analytical knowledge and skills. These skills enable youths to analyse things in the social discourse with sound minds and make informed decisions on various social issues. The same findings came out during an interview with one of the senior citizens who postulated that, *"Nowadays there is an improvement in social engagements, we see our young ones showing respect to other traditional ceremonies, during the Mutomomolo tradition ceremony of the Mambwe and Lungu people I saw lot of youths turning up in numbers to celebrate."* From the foregoing, Civic Education stresses on the importance of promoting cultural heritage of any society as the way of encouraging social responsibilities of citizens on their culture, more especially when people have understood the pivotal role of culture, and custom of the society. When youths have acquired civic knowledge about the importance of traditions of the society, they begin to respect other people's culture. They also start to take part in traditional ceremonies thereby promoting cultural development. In tandem, Thelma (2024) noted that, Civic Education leads to cultural development by emphasizing the preserving and promoting a nation's cultural heritage, diversity, and identity.

2. Morality such as respect

Further, the findings of the study revealed that, Civic education promote social-cultural values among Zambian youths by building them with moral needs and support of open minded as the young generation of the nation to be able to accept and care for the nation itself, practical and strategic needs include the needs of all levels of society or citizens in developing morals. During focus group discussion one participant said, *"Because of the knowledge I got from Civic Education, I have open minded of accepting my friend's opinions and respect them even if I do not support the idea brought forth."* Correspondingly, Sydnor (2019) wrote that in Civic Education students learn acquire civic virtue which requires the genuine desire to understand another's perspective, and is thus bound up with intellectual virtues such as open-mindedness, curiosity, intellectual humility, and the love of learning. As for open- mindedness, one must be open to the other's perspective. Civic education is to promote responsible, ethical and community-minded individuals.

3. Good Family health practices

In addition, the findings revealed that, Civic Education inculcates social-cultural values in the area of reproductive health and family health. During data collection to be in particular in an interview the interviewee responded that,

“Civic Education enables youths to improve in family health by developing good morals and acquire values together with attitudes that enhance family welfare and have knowledge of good reproductive health and safe-guarding health of a society. It makes them to become responsible citizens who can handle matters relating to discrimination of any kind and educate them about the importance of not discriminating people with disabilities and diseases such as HIV/AIDS.”

Through Civic Education students are taught the importance of social engagement in promoting good health habits both at individual and community levels. Civility among youth’s entails having of youths who are equipped with good morals and behaviours that support a healthy environment in family life. Youths that promote the practice of good family planning methods and safe sex thereby promoting social development in Zambia. Social development focuses on improving the quality of life for all citizens, addressing issues such as healthcare, education, housing, and social welfare (Thelma, 2024).

Moreover, in a focus group discussion, one participant brought to the attention of the researcher that, *“Civic Education learning teaches the students to behave in accordance with the existing rules both within the school environment and in the community. Thus, Civic Education provides a space for students to continue to develop the morals contained in students' self-potential.”* As evidenced from the forgoing discussions and verbatim of the respondents Civic Education is a key predictor in promoting social and cultural values such as respect, tolerance, faithfulness, and good habits among youths in Zambia. Respectively, Chanda (2023) stresses that, Civic education imparts citizens with civic knowledge, civic skills and civic virtues Values, such as fundamental rights, patriotism, respect for human dignity, rationality, sacrifice equality, good health practices and preserving of culture among other social and cultural acceptable behaviours in society. In simple terms, social values are described as measures of goodness or desirability.

4. Ineffectiveness of Civic Education in promoting social-cultural values

The study also revealed that Civic Education in Zambia in rather some cases is not effective in the inculcation of social cultural-values among youths. Below is the detailed discussion of the aforementioned.

On the other hand, the study found that some youths (school leavers) who were learning Civic Education as a subject at senior secondary school had not displayed the acquisition of acceptable social and cultural values as required by the society. In an interview with a senior citizen, it was revealed that,

“Despite Civic Education being a good subject that shapes the behaviour of learners, some of the school leavers’ behaviour needs much to be desired. They portray very bad social and cultural behaviours is society today, they are engaged in bad vices such as indecent dressing, drug abuse, disrespectful to elders and all forms of social and cultural vices.”

In an interview with one of the interviewees said that, *“The current crop of school leavers will fail to help the next generation if the moral is not changed for the better, especially when viewed from the youth who were taking Civic Education, many of them do not have good morals and manners, so it is not in accordance with the basic of the society.”* Social-cultural values are being faded away among the learners and as such, youths are imbibing and show all forms of immorality with impunity, with its resultant effects on the Zambian society at large. In tandem, another senior citizen responded that, *“It is absurd, these days, to see individuals doing things at variance with laid-down norms and mores.”* Consequently, the behavioural disposition of students in schools today is contrary to the desired values expected of responsible citizens in the nearest future.

CONCLUSION

The study was made possible by looking at the effectiveness of Civic Education in promoting social-cultural values among youths in Zambia. The study established that Civic Education enhances social-cultural values by inculcating youths with knowledge about the society, empowering youths with well-informed minded thereby making sound decisions, fostering good character and substantive knowledge, increased awareness, enhanced civic engagement, political tolerance, cultural diversity among others. Basing on the findings from this study it can be deduced that, Civic Education plays a pivotal role in the promotion of acceptable social and moral values in Zambian societies. However, not all youths who have been exposed to Civic Education while at senior secondary school portrays acceptable social and cultural norms in society. Hence, there is a need to enhance civic awareness trainings through non-formal means, production of civic awareness materials as one way of fostering Civic Education among youths, and incorporating Civic Education at all levels of societal endeavours.

REFERENCES

1. Bryman, A. (2008). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: OUP.
2. Carole G. V. (2015). Civility and Democracy. *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy*. July 2015.
3. Chanda C. T. (2023). Effects of Civic Education on Learners' Decision-Making: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools in Lusaka District, Zambia. *International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*
4. Chondoka, A. Y. et al. (2010). *Civic Education Teachers Manual*. Lusaka: ZEPH.
5. Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage Publications.
6. Giddens, A. and Sutton, P. (2010). *Essential Concepts in Sociology*. Polity press: Cambridge.
7. Husen, A. B. (2018). The Role of Citizenship Education in Developing Democracy in Iraq. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies* ISSN 2520-0968 (Online), ISSN 2409-1294 (Print), December 2018, Vol.5, No.2.
8. Jamieson, K. H., Volinsky, A., Weitz, I., and Kenski, K. (2017). "The Political Uses and Abuses of Civility and Incivility" in K. H. Jamiesone and K. Kenski (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Communication*. New York, Oxford University Press.
9. Kardiyat, W. (2014). *Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan*. Yogyakarta: Universitas Sanatadarma.
10. Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research and Methodology: Methods and Techniques (2 Ed)*. New Delhi: New Age International (p) Limited, Publishers.
11. Magasu, O., Muleya, G. and Mweemba, L. (2020). Pedagogical Challenges in Teaching Civic Education in Secondary Schools in Zambia. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*. Vol 9, Issue 3, (2319-7064), 1483-1488.
12. MoE. (1996). *Educating Our Future*. Lusaka: Government Printers
13. MoE. (2013). *2013 Revised Curriculum*. Lusaka: Curriculum Development Centre.
14. Muleya, G. (2015). *The Teaching of Civic Education in Zambia: An Examination of Trends in the Teaching of Civic education in Schools*. Doctoral Thesis: University of South Africa.
15. Muleya, G. (2017). 'The Conceptual Challenges in the Conceptualization of Civic Education'. In *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*. Vol 1, Issue 1, pp 59-81.
16. Muleya, G. (2018). 'Civic Education versus Citizenship Education: Where is the point of convergence?' In *Journal of Lexicography and Terminology*. Vol 2, Issue 1, pp 109-129.
17. Musonda, F. (2024). *Potency of Civic Education in Promoting Civility among Youths in Zambia*. Unpublished.
18. Peterson, A. (2011). *Civic Republicanism and Civic Education, the Education of Citizens*. Palgrave Macmillan: London.
19. Peterson, A. (2019). *Civility and Democratic Education*. Singapore: Springer.

20. Snow N. E. (2020). *Citizens' Relationships, Political Civility, and the Civic Virtue of Listening*. Oklahoma: The Jubilee Centre.
21. Strandbrink, P. (2017). *Civic Education and Liberal Democracy*. Macmillan: Palgrave studies in global citizenship education and democracy
22. Sydnor, E. (2019). *Disrespectful Democracy: The Psychology of Political Incivility*. New York: Columbia University Press.
23. Thelma, C. C. (2024). Civic Education and National Development: A Comprehensive Analysis of Zambia. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 50(6), 170–190. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2024/v50i61404>