

Civic Education at a Crossroads in Zambia: A Case Study of the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the causes of learner discontent in the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination in Zambia. The study was motivated by the unprecedented learner protests during the 2023 examination session, which raised concerns about the relevance and fairness of the assessment process. The study adopted a qualitative research approach using a descriptive case study design. Data were collected through oral interviews with Civic Education teachers and school leavers from selected secondary schools in Lusaka District. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select participants, while data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that the major causes of learner discontent were the inclusion of unfamiliar questions from untaught topics, limited examination time, and an overly broad paper coverage. The study further identified difficult topics such as separation of powers, corruption under specific Acts, the Bill of Rights, and international organisations particularly the United Nations as the most challenging for learners. The study concluded that the current assessment model in Civic Education was heavily theory-based and did not adequately measure civic competencies such as skills, values, and attitudes. To address these issues, the study recommended syllabus tracking to ensure full coverage, adoption of interactive teaching methods, integration of continuous assessment, and teacher retraining in assessment design. Additionally, learners should be sensitized and trained in study skills and exam preparation. Furthermore, it recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) realign Civic Education assessments with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) to enhance learner engagement, fairness, and performance.

Keywords: Civic Education; Crossroads; Zambia; Examinations; 2023

Context and Background

Civic Education plays a critical role in nurturing knowledgeable, responsive, and active citizens capable of participating effectively in democratic engagement and community development. It is both a formal and an informal process of acquiring knowledge, values, and skills necessary for meaningful participation in political and civic life. Magasu et al. (2020) conceptualize Civic Education as a social science discipline that transmits social, cultural, economic, and political values essential for sustaining democratic citizenship.

In 2003, in Zambia, the Ministry of Education (MoE), in collaboration with the Zambia Civic Education Association (ZCEA) and the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), introduced Civic Education as a compulsory subject at senior secondary school level (Grades 10–12). The introduction aimed to cultivate civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions that enable learners to engage constructively in democratic processes and community affairs. Over the years, the teaching and learning of Civic Education has contributed to promoting civic awareness and active citizenship among learners, thereby supporting the development of responsible and informed citizens.

Currently, the Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination is structured into three sections: A, B, and C. Section A comprises 20 multiple-choice questions worth one mark each, Section B consists of five structured questions carrying a total of 40 marks, while Section C contains five essay-type questions, of which candidates are required to answer two, contributing 20 marks (ECZ, 2020–2022). Although Section A is generally considered manageable by most candidates, Section C poses significant challenges as it requires learners to demonstrate higher-order thinking, analytical reasoning, and essay-writing proficiency.

Initially, Civic Education was among the most preferred and best-performing subjects at the Grade 12 level. However, following changes in the examination structure, a decline in learners' performance has been observed. In recent years, particularly in 2023, there were instances of learner protests in selected schools within Lusaka, where candidates expressed dissatisfaction with the perceived difficulty of the Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination. ECZ (2023) confirmed a decline of 4.27% in overall performance in the 2023 Civic Education examination, further indicating that many candidates struggled with sections requiring extended responses and application of concepts.

Previous studies by (Magasu et al., 2021, 2022) have identified persistent challenges affecting the effective teaching and learning of Civic Education in Zambian schools. These challenges include inadequate teaching and learning materials, an overloaded curriculum, and limited pedagogical competence among teachers, many of whom continue to rely heavily on teacher-centred instructional approaches. Such challenges may contribute to learners' poor conceptual understanding and low performance in examinations that demand analytical and reflective thinking.

These developments raise concerns about the declining popularity and performance of Civic Education despite its central role in promoting democratic citizenship. Furthermore, the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination provides a compelling case for investigating the factors contributing to poor learner performance and the resulting dissatisfaction among candidates. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the contextual and pedagogical issues surrounding the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination in Zambia, with the aim of understanding factors contributing to learner discontent.

Significance of the Study

This study makes several important contributions. First, it may contribute to the growing body of knowledge on curriculum implementation and assessment in Civic Education under Zambia's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). By examining the causes of learner discontent with the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination, the study may provide valuable insights into the disconnect between instructional practices, curriculum intent, and assessment design.

Secondly, the study has practical significance for policymakers, educators, and examination bodies such as MoE, ECZ, and CDC. Its findings may inform reforms aimed at aligning Civic Education assessments with competency-based learning outcomes that emphasize critical thinking, civic participation, and value-based education.

Thirdly, the study may benefit Civic Education teachers by highlighting pedagogical and assessment challenges that contribute to poor learner performance. It may provide empirical guidance on effective teaching approaches, syllabus coverage, and strategies for preparing learners for examinations.

Finally, the study is socially significant as it underscores the need to strengthen civic literacy, democratic engagement, and moral responsibility among Zambian learners. Improving how Civic Education is taught and assessed may help shape active, informed, and responsible citizens, which is essential for Zambia's democratic and social development.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative research approach grounded in the interpretivist paradigm. The interpretivist stance was appropriate because the study sought to understand participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and

interpretations of the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination. A descriptive case study design was employed to provide an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon within its real-life educational context, focusing specifically on selected secondary schools in Lusaka District.

Study Site and Participants

The study was conducted in Lusaka District, where reports of learner dissatisfaction and protest following the 2023 Civic Education examination were recorded.

The study comprised the following participants:

- 10 Civic Education teachers (currently teaching Grade 12 or who taught the 2023 cohort)
- 8 school leavers who sat for the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education examination

Teachers were selected based on their direct involvement in preparing candidates for the 2023 examination. School leavers were included to provide firsthand accounts of their examination experiences.

Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was used to select Civic Education teachers with relevant professional experience in teaching and assessment. Snowball sampling was subsequently employed to identify school leavers who had sat for the 2023 examination, particularly those willing to reflect critically on their experiences.

This combination of sampling strategies ensured the inclusion of information-rich participants capable of providing detailed insights into classroom practices, syllabus coverage, and examination experiences.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through semi-structured oral interviews conducted between January and March 2024. Each interview lasted approximately 40–60 minutes.

An interview guide was developed around the following thematic areas:

- Examination preparation strategies
- Syllabus coverage
- Perceived fairness and difficulty of the examination
- Time allocation
- Suggested reforms to assessment practices

Interviews were conducted face-to-face in quiet school environments to ensure confidentiality and minimize disruption. With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim for analysis. Field notes were also taken to capture non-verbal cues and contextual observations.

Documentary Analysis

To strengthen contextual understanding, the study incorporated documentary evidence from ECZ, including:

- Chief Examiners' Reports (2020–2023)
- The 2023 Annual Performance Report
- The Civic Education examination format guidelines

These documents were analyzed to verify reported performance trends, examination structure, and official commentary on candidate performance. The ECZ (2023) Annual Performance Report, for example, confirmed a 4.27% decline in overall performance in Civic Education, thereby corroborating participants' claims of performance decline.

Documentary analysis enhanced the credibility of interview findings by situating them within national performance data.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis following a systematic procedure:

1. Familiarization with the data through repeated reading of transcripts
2. Initial coding of significant statements
3. Grouping codes into categories
4. Development of broader themes
5. Interpretation of themes in relation to the theoretical framework

Emerging themes included:

- Unfamiliar examination content
- Inadequate syllabus coverage
- Limited examination time
- Broad paper coverage
- Need for assessment reform

The integration of interview data with documentary evidence enabled cross-verification of findings.

Trustworthiness and Validation Strategies

To enhance methodological rigor, several strategies were employed:

i. Triangulation

Data were triangulated across:

- Teacher interviews
- Learner interviews
- ECZ documentary evidence

This allowed for cross-validation of findings and reduced reliance on a single data source.

ii. Peer Debriefing

Draft transcripts, codes, and thematic interpretations were reviewed by two independent researchers with expertise in Civic Education and qualitative research. Their feedback helped refine theme development and minimize researcher bias.

iii. Member Checking

Selected participants were consulted to verify the accuracy of transcribed responses and emerging interpretations. This ensured that findings accurately reflected participants' views.

iv. Thick Description

Detailed participant quotations were included to provide contextual depth and allow readers to assess the credibility and transferability of findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from relevant educational authorities. Participants provided informed consent prior to participation. Confidentiality was ensured by assigning pseudonyms (e.g., Teacher T1, Candidate C1). Participation was voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw at any stage without consequence. All data were used strictly for academic purposes.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two complementary theories: Constructivist Learning Theory and Assessment for Learning Theory. Together, they provide a conceptual foundation for understanding the relationship between pedagogy, curriculum implementation, and learner performance in Civic Education.

Constructivist Learning Theory (Jean Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978)

Constructivist theory posits that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their environment and social contexts rather than passively receiving information. Learning is thus a process of meaning-making, where prior knowledge, experiences, and reflection shape understanding.

In the context of Civic Education in Zambia, constructivism emphasizes active learner engagement, critical thinking, and collaborative learning—all of which are essential for developing civic competencies such as democratic participation, value-based reasoning, and problem-solving. However, the findings of this study reveal that Civic Education instruction in many schools remains teacher-centred, focusing on rote memorization and examination drills. This limits learners' ability to apply knowledge critically and meaningfully.

Therefore, the constructivist framework helps explain how limited interactive pedagogy and insufficient experiential learning contribute to poor performance and learner discontent with the 2023 Civic Education examination. It also underscores the need for learner-centered approaches such as debates, simulations, and project-based learning that foster deeper understanding and application of civic concepts.

Assessment for Learning (AfL) Theory (Black & Wiliam, 1998)

Assessment for Learning emphasizes the formative use of assessment to support and enhance student learning. Unlike summative assessment, which merely evaluates achievement at the end of instruction, AfL views assessment as an integral part of the learning process that provides continuous feedback to learners and teachers.

In this study, AfL theory is relevant in analyzing how the current theory-based and summative examination system in Civic Education limits opportunities for learners to demonstrate broader civic competencies such as skills, attitudes, and values. The ECZ examination framework primarily tests cognitive recall rather than civic participation and value-based decision-making.

Through the AfL lens, the study advocates for a balanced assessment model that integrates formative and summative components. This would encourage continuous monitoring of learners' progress, enhance motivation, and align evaluation practices with the CBC goals of holistic citizenship education.

Integration of the Two Theories

Together, Constructivist Learning Theory and Assessment for Learning Theory provide a coherent lens for understanding the challenges surrounding the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education examination. Constructivism highlights the importance of learner-centered pedagogy, while AfL stresses continuous and competency-based assessment. The misalignment between these two elements; teaching and assessment explains the learners' discontent and declining performance in Civic Education.

Therefore, the theoretical framework guides this study in exploring how pedagogical practices, curriculum coverage, and assessment approaches interact to influence learners' perceptions and outcomes in Civic Education.

RESULTS

This section presents findings on the factors that caused learner discontent in the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination in Zambia. The results are organised according to the study's research questions:

What key factors caused learner discontent in the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination in Zambia?

Which topics were difficult for learners to answer in the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination in Zambia?

What effective measures can be taken to reduce learner discontent towards the Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination in Zambia?

Factors that Caused Learner Discontent

To address the first research question, participants were asked to identify the key factors that contributed to learner discontent in the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education Final Examination in Zambia. Analysis of responses generated three major themes:

- Unfamiliar questions from topics not taught in class
- Limited examination time
- Wider coverage of the examination paper

Unfamiliar Questions

Participants indicated that several examination questions were unfamiliar to learners and appeared to originate from topics that had either not been taught or were rarely emphasised during classroom instruction. Both teachers and candidates reported that some questions introduced concepts and terminologies that learners had not encountered during their studies.

Some teachers also acknowledged that certain questions included content with which they themselves were not fully familiar.

One teacher explained:

"I saw questions containing terminologies that I had not taught in class, particularly Latin legal terms. Question 3 was difficult because it included unfamiliar concepts from the Bill of Rights such as Frivolous, Salus Populi Suprema Lex, and Writ of Certiorari, which are not commonly taught to learners."

Another teacher stated:

"The most difficult questions were in Section B, particularly Question 2 on corruption, which required knowledge of the Penal Code Chapter 87 of the Laws of Zambia, the Financial Intelligence Act No. 46 of 2010,

the Public Disclosure Act No. 4 of 2010, and the Forfeiture of Crime Act No. 19 of 2010. These concepts were unfamiliar to learners, and even we teachers have limited details on them.”

Similarly, one candidate who sat for the examination reported:

“That examination was not fair because it introduced new concepts. Most questions in Section B were unfamiliar and very difficult. There was also a picture of a monument related to the United Nations with questions about former Secretary General which we had never studied. I only answered Section A and a few questions in Section C, but I left Section B blank. When the results came out, I failed Civic Education.”

Another candidate echoed this concern:

“The 2023 Civic Education examination was very difficult because it contained many concepts that we had never learned at school. Section B was particularly challenging. Even the multiple-choice questions had difficult vocabulary.”

Teachers further argued that the examination appeared to disadvantage candidates, particularly in Section B, which contained the majority of unfamiliar and complex questions.

Limited Time

Participants also reported that the time allocated for the examination was insufficient. Although the standard duration is normally considered adequate, the unfamiliarity and complexity of the questions forced learners to spend more time interpreting the questions rather than writing responses.

One teacher explained:

“Most learners were unable to complete the questions before the end of the examination. Many candidates were still thinking through the difficult questions when the final siren went.”

Another teacher added: “Under normal circumstances the time for Civic Education is sufficient. However, the 2023 paper was different because the questions were difficult and unfamiliar. Learners spent too much time trying to understand them, and most candidates left Section B unanswered.”

Candidates also confirmed that time constraints negatively affected their performance.

One candidate stated:

“Time was not enough. We spent too much time thinking about Section B questions, and in the end we did not attempt some of them. That is why many of us failed.”

Wider Content Coverage

Participants further noted that the examination paper covered a very broad range of topics from across the syllabus. Teachers indicated that the wide scope of the paper made it particularly demanding for learners who had not comprehensively studied all topics.

One teacher remarked:

“The setters included questions from almost every topic, including areas such as the Secretary General of the United Nations, which are not usually emphasised in class. This made the paper excessively broad.”

Another teacher added:

“You cannot bring questions from very complex topics which teachers do not usually cover in detail. Some of the questions appeared to come from general knowledge rather than the Civic Education syllabus.”

Topics that Were Difficult for Learners

To answer the second research question, participants were asked to identify the topics that learners found most difficult in the 2023 Civic Education examination. The following themes emerged:

- Governance and the principle of separation of powers
- Corruption and related legal Acts
- The Bill of Rights
- International organisations, particularly the United Nations

One teacher explained:

“The question on separation of powers was difficult because it required learners to explain how the principle contributes to good governance.”

Another teacher noted:

“The topic on corruption was challenging because the questions referred to several Acts which learners do not study in detail. The terminologies used in the Bill of Rights were also confusing.”

Regarding the United Nations, teachers indicated that a question based on a monument associated with the organisation confused many learners.

Candidates themselves reported that they struggled with several topics in the examination.

One candidate stated:

“Most of the topics in the 2023 examination paper were difficult, and I could not answer many of the questions.”

Another candidate added:

“The question about the United Nations monument and the Secretary General sounded more like a history question than a Civic Education question.”

Effective Measures to Reduce Learner Discontent

To address the third research question, participants were asked to propose measures that could reduce learner discontent towards the Grade 12 Civic Education examination. The following themes emerged:

- Completion of the syllabus
- Use of interactive teaching methods
- Revising the assessment approach in Civic Education
- Training teachers in assessment preparation
- Intensive revision before examinations
- Learner sensitisation and training in study skills

Completion of the Syllabus

Participants emphasised the need for teachers to complete the Civic Education syllabus in good time. Teachers indicated that the subject covers a wide range of topics and that incomplete syllabus coverage may leave learners unprepared for the examination.

One teacher stated:

“Teachers must ensure that the entire syllabus is covered thoroughly so that learners are adequately prepared for the examination.”

Another teacher added:

“Topics such as the Bill of Rights must be taught in detail so that learners develop a clear understanding before sitting for the examination.”

Candidates also supported the need for complete syllabus coverage to avoid knowledge gaps.

Use of Interactive Teaching Methods

Participants recommended the use of learner-centred and participatory teaching methods such as debates, role plays, group discussions, and field trips to enhance learner engagement and understanding.

One teacher explained:

“Civic Education should not rely on memorisation. Teachers need to use participatory methods that enable learners to apply knowledge to real-life situations.”

Another teacher added:

“Rote learning should be discouraged. Methods such as debates, role plays, dramatization, and group discussions help learners develop deeper understanding.”

Candidates also expressed similar views:

“Teachers should allow more interactive learning in Civic Education so that learners understand concepts in a practical way rather than just listening to lectures.”

Revising the Assessment Approach

Participants suggested that the Ministry of Education, through the Examination Council of Zambia, should review the assessment methods used in Civic Education. Since Civic Education is a practical and value-oriented subject, participants proposed incorporating alternative forms of assessment such as:

- Interviews
- Debates
- Focus group discussions
- Research projects
- Paper presentations
- Quizzes
- Essay writing

Teachers argued that these approaches promote higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis.

For example, one teacher explained:

“Interviews encourage learners to explain civic issues in depth and demonstrate their understanding of civic values and concepts.”

Another teacher highlighted the benefits of debates:

“During debates, learners research topics using different sources such as newspapers and magazines, which makes them more knowledgeable and confident in discussing civic issues.”

Teachers also noted that research projects allow learners to investigate real civic issues within their communities.

One teacher gave the example:

“Learners could conduct research on causes of corruption in public institutions such as schools or police stations and present their findings.”

Teachers also supported the use of quizzes and essay writing to reinforce understanding and improve analytical skills.

Training Teachers in Assessment Preparation

Participants emphasised the need for professional development for teachers in assessment design and item writing. Teachers suggested that workshops and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes should be organised to improve question-setting skills.

One teacher explained:

“Teachers need formal training on how to set standard examination questions instead of simply copying past examination papers.”

Participants also recommended collaboration among schools when setting end-of-term tests to expose learners to a variety of high-quality assessment items.

Learner Sensitisation and Study Skills Training

Participants emphasised the need to sensitise learners about the importance of assessments and to train them in effective study skills.

One teacher stated:

“Teachers should train learners on how to study Civic Education, including what to study, when to study, and which resources to use.”

Another teacher added:

“Learners should be informed about assessment methods and examination expectations so that they can prepare adequately.”

Intensive Revision

Finally, participants recommended intensive revision before examinations using past examination papers and relevant study materials.

One teacher explained:

“Teachers should conduct thorough revision sessions using past examination papers and other study materials to familiarise learners with examination questions.”

Similarly, one candidate stated:

“Teachers should revise extensively with candidates before the examination. In our case, we only revised for about two weeks, which was not enough.”

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal a significant misalignment between the intended outcomes of Civic Education and the actual assessment practices used in the 2023 Grade 12 Civic Education examination. Learners' discontent, as observed through protests and dissatisfaction, reflects broader systemic challenges in curriculum implementation, teacher preparedness, and assessment design.

Misalignment between Curriculum and Assessment

A key issue emerging from the data is the disconnection between the curriculum's emphasis on civic competencies—knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and the examination's focus on cognitive recall. According to Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978), meaningful learning occurs when learners actively construct understanding through interaction and reflection. However, the 2023 examination emphasized rote memorization and recall of abstract concepts, undermining the constructivist intent of the Civic Education curriculum. This misalignment not only limited learners' ability to demonstrate critical and reflective thinking but also eroded their confidence in the fairness and relevance of the examination.

Pedagogical Constraints and Limited Teacher Capacity

The findings also highlight pedagogical weaknesses, including incomplete syllabus coverage, reliance on lecture-based methods, and inadequate exposure to applied learning tasks. Many teachers admitted failing to complete the syllabus or adequately prepare learners for questions derived from Acts, the Bill of Rights, and international organizations. This supports earlier studies by Magasu et al. (2020, 2021), which identified teacher-centred instruction and inadequate resources as persistent barriers to effective Civic Education delivery in Zambia. The lack of professional development in assessment design further compounds the issue, leading to a mismatch between classroom teaching and examination content.

Assessment Fairness and Learner Perceptions

The participants' views revealed strong concerns about assessment fairness, particularly regarding unfamiliar and untaught topics. From an Assessment for Learning (AfL) perspective (Black & Wiliam, 1998), assessments should provide continuous feedback and measure learning progress rather than merely evaluate outcomes. The 2023 examination, being summative and theory-heavy, failed to capture learners' broader civic competencies. Consequently, learners perceived the assessment as punitive and demotivating—contrary to AfL principles that promote learner engagement and formative feedback.

The Role of Time and Content Breadth

Limited examination time and broad paper coverage were recurring themes. These issues highlight structural flaws in assessment design, where complex and extensive content is tested under rigid time constraints. This design disproportionately disadvantages average learners, especially those from under-resourced schools. As teachers observed, learners spent more time trying to comprehend unfamiliar questions than answering them—indicating a mismatch between test design and learner readiness.

Need for Transformative Pedagogies and Assessment Practices

Consistent with the theoretical underpinnings of constructivism and AfL, the study underscores the need for transformative teaching and assessment practices. Teachers and learners advocated for interactive, learner-centered methods such as debates, role plays, discussions, and research projects. These methods not only enhance conceptual understanding but also allow for assessment of higher-order cognitive and civic competencies. Introducing continuous assessment and performance-based evaluation within the ECZ framework would help bridge the gap between learning and assessment, aligning Civic Education more closely with CBC goals.

Policy and Institutional Implications

At the policy level, the findings call for coordinated reform between MoE, CDC, and ECZ. There is an urgent need to redesign Civic Education assessments to reflect authentic learning outcomes and to train teachers in

competency-based pedagogy and assessment design. Schools should institutionalize syllabus tracking systems and allocate adequate resources for formative assessment activities. Additionally, redefining school accountability to include civic competence indicators rather than mere pass rates would promote a more holistic approach to education quality.

Theoretical Reflection

Through the dual lenses of Constructivist Learning Theory and Assessment for Learning, this study demonstrates that learner dissatisfaction in Civic Education is not merely a response to a difficult paper but an expression of systemic inconsistencies in how teaching, learning, and evaluation are structured. Constructivism advocates for knowledge construction through active engagement, while AfL promotes ongoing feedback and learner participation. The lack of integration between these principles explains the persistent challenges observed. Therefore, a paradigm shift that unites these two frameworks is essential for achieving meaningful, competency-based civic education in Zambia.

CONCLUSION

The findings imply that Civic Education in Zambia is at a crossroads, while it aims to nurture responsible, active citizens, its current assessment practices undermine that goal. A paradigm shift is required in policy, pedagogy, and assessment to align with the CBC and foster democratic values, critical inquiry, and social responsibility among learners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, this study proposes the following recommendations to improve the teaching, learning, and assessment of Civic Education in Zambia:

1. Realignment of Assessment with the CBC

ECZ should review the current Civic Education examination framework to align it with the CBC. This includes incorporating performance-based assessments such as debates, projects, research work, and oral presentations that assess not only knowledge but also civic values, skills, and attitudes.

2. Strengthening Teacher Professional Development

MoE through the CDC and Teacher Education and Specialized Services (TESS), should provide continuous professional development (CPD) programmes focusing on modern assessment techniques, item writing, and competency-based pedagogy. Such training should empower teachers to design learner-centered assessments and promote critical thinking in Civic Education.

3. Ensuring Comprehensive Syllabus Coverage

Schools and district education boards should institute syllabus tracking mechanisms to ensure that teachers cover all topics comprehensively before examinations. This will prevent learner exposure to unfamiliar content and promote fairness in assessment.

4. Promoting Interactive and Experiential Learning

Teachers should employ participatory teaching methods such as role plays, debates, field visits, and simulations to make learning more practical and reflective. These approaches are consistent with Constructivist Learning Theory and help learners develop higher-order cognitive and civic competencies.

5. Enhancing Learner Preparation and Study Skills

Schools should establish learner sensitization and mentorship programmes to build study skills, examination techniques, and confidence. Teachers must regularly conduct formative assessments and provide timely feedback to guide learners in improving their performance.

6. Strengthening Resource Allocation

The government and cooperating partners should increase funding for Civic Education instructional materials, reference books, and classroom technology. Adequate resources will enable teachers to adopt diverse teaching and assessment methods aligned with CBC principles.

7. Reforming Accountability and Evaluation Systems

Policymakers should broaden the criteria for evaluating school performance beyond examination results to include indicators of civic engagement, value-based learning, and social responsibility among learners. This would encourage schools to prioritize holistic civic competence rather than rote memorization.

Implications for Future Research

The study noted that further research should examine actual learner performance trends and explore how continuous assessment could enhance civic competence. This implies that:

- Future researchers and institutions should conduct longitudinal studies on the relationship between assessment methods and civic behavior outcomes.
- Universities should collaborate with schools to pilot alternative assessment models within the Civic Education curriculum.

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