

An Investigation into the Impact of Teaching Methodologies on Civic Education Learning Outcomes: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools in Mansa District, Zambia

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Abstract-

This study examined the impact of teaching methodologies on Civic Education learning outcomes in selected secondary schools in Mansa District, Zambia. It was motivated by the persistent mismatch between the learner-centered Civic Education curriculum and the predominantly teacher-centered instructional practices observed in classrooms. Despite curriculum reforms emphasizing participatory and reflective pedagogies, many teachers continued to rely on traditional lecture-based methods, raising concerns about learner engagement and academic achievement. The study was guided by three objectives: to identify teaching strategies used in Civic Education, to assess the impact of teaching methodologies on learning outcomes, and to analyse the influence of pupil demographics and school context on teaching effectiveness. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine teaching strategies used in Civic Education and their impact on learning outcomes in selected secondary schools in Mansa District, Zambia. Data were collected from 100 respondents using questionnaires, with additional information obtained from secondary sources. Quantitative data were analysed using multiple linear regression analysis and descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) to examine relationships between teaching methodologies and learning outcomes. The study found that 57% of respondents were female and most were aged 14–20 years, with Civic Education mainly taught through teacher-centered methods such as lectures (30%). Regression results showed that teaching methodologies, classroom interaction, and teacher qualifications significantly influence learning outcomes ($R^2=0.79$), while school context and pupil demographics also had a strong effect ($R^2=0.71$). The study concludes that teaching is still largely traditional, but interactive methods and classroom engagement are the strongest determinants of performance. It recommends increased use of learner-centered strategies, regular teacher training, improved school resources, and reduced class sizes. Overall, enhancing instructional practices and learning environments would significantly improve Civic Education outcomes in Mansa District.

Keywords: Civic Education, Teaching Methodologies, Learning Outcomes, Secondary Schools, Mansa District

Introduction

Globally, education systems have increasingly shifted toward learner-centered and reflective pedagogies that emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving, and active participation as essential skills for preparing learners for the demands of the 21st century (Carretero et al., 2016; Zeichner and Liston, 2014). Regionally in Africa, many education systems have adopted curriculum reforms that promote competency-based and participatory teaching approaches aimed at improving the quality and relevance of education, particularly in subjects such as Civic Education that foster citizenship, democracy, and social responsibility (Muleya, 2019; Finlay, 2008). In Zambia, the Ministry of Education revised the curriculum in 2013 to align with these global and regional trends by promoting holistic education and integrating Civic Education into Social Studies at junior secondary level while maintaining it as a standalone subject at senior secondary level, with the aim of developing learners' understanding of governance, human rights, and civic responsibility (MoE, 2013; MESVTEE, 2013). However, at the local level, particularly in secondary schools such as those in Mansa District, concerns remain that despite these curriculum reforms, classroom practices are still largely dominated by teacher-centered methods, with limited use of reflective and participatory teaching strategies, raising questions about the effectiveness of Civic Education delivery and its impact on learner outcomes (Mufalo et al., 2021; Likando, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

The problem is that there is a mismatch between the intended learner-centered Civic Education curriculum in Zambia and the actual teaching practices used in secondary schools, particularly in Mansa District. Ideally, Civic Education should be delivered through participatory, reflective, and learner-centered approaches that enable learners to critically analyse social issues, understand democratic values, and apply knowledge to real-life situations, as emphasized in the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (MoE, 2013), which promotes active learning and positions teachers as facilitators rather than mere transmitters of knowledge. However, in reality, many Civic Education lessons continue to rely heavily on teacher-centered methods such as lecturing, note-giving, and memorization, despite curriculum reforms advocating for more interactive and reflective pedagogies. This creates a gap between policy expectations and classroom practice, raising concerns about whether the recommended teaching strategies are effectively implemented and whether they are achieving the intended learning outcomes. As a result of this gap, learners may fail to develop critical thinking skills, civic competence, and the ability to meaningfully engage in democratic processes, thereby undermining the overall goal of Civic Education to produce informed, active, and responsible citizens. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the teaching methodologies used in Civic Education and their impact on learning outcomes in selected secondary schools in Mansa District, Zambia.

The General objective

The general objective is to investigate the impact of teaching methodologies on civic education learning outcomes: a case of selected secondary schools in Mansa district, Zambia

Specific objectives

To investigate the teaching strategies used in teaching civic education in the selected secondary schools of Mansa district, Zambia.

To examine the impact of the teaching methodologies used on the learning outcomes in the selected secon-

dary schools in Mansa district, Zambia.

To analyse the how pupil demographics and school contexts influence the effectiveness of the teaching methods in civic education?

Literature Review

Global Perspectives

Carretero et al. (2016) conducted a study on teaching approaches in Civic Education and found that learner-centered and participatory methods such as discussions, debates, and reflective learning improved learners' critical thinking, civic participation, and understanding of democratic values. The study concluded that Civic Education becomes more effective when learners actively participate in the learning process rather than depending on memorization. The researchers recommended that schools should adopt reflective and interactive teaching methods to improve learning outcomes in Civic Education. Similarly, Finlay (2008) found that reflective practice strategies help learners connect classroom knowledge to real-life situations, thereby improving understanding and retention of knowledge. The study recommended continuous teacher training in reflective teaching approaches. These findings are supported by Zeichner and Liston (2014), who argued that reflective teaching transforms teachers into facilitators of learning and promotes active learner engagement. However, some scholars have argued that learner-centered approaches may be difficult to implement effectively in overcrowded classrooms and schools with limited teaching resources.

Regional Perspectives

Regionally, Muleya (2019) examined the role of reflective pedagogies in Civic Education in Africa and found that teaching strategies which encourage learners to reflect on their social and political realities promote critical consciousness and social transformation. The study concluded that participatory teaching methods are essential for effective Civic Education because they help learners understand democratic values and citizenship responsibilities. The study recommended increased use of learner-centered methods such as debates, role plays, and group discussions in African schools. Likewise, Likando (2019) found that although many African countries have adopted competency-based curricula, teachers still heavily rely on lecture methods due to limited teaching resources, inadequate teacher preparation, and large class sizes. The study recommended increased government support through teacher training and provision of adequate teaching materials. These findings agree with those of Carretero et al. (2016) but contradict studies which suggest that teacher-centered methods remain useful in managing large classrooms and completing syllabi within limited time.

National Perspectives

In Zambia, Mufalo et al. (2021) investigated pedagogical practices in secondary schools and found that many teachers lacked adequate pedagogical knowledge to effectively implement learner-centered teaching methods in Civic Education. The study revealed that most teachers depended on lectures and note-giving, which negatively affected learner participation and critical thinking skills. The researchers concluded that inadequate pedagogical skills reduce the effectiveness of Civic Education instruction and recommended continuous professional development for teachers. Similarly, Muleya (2018a) found that although the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework of 2013 emphasizes reflective and participatory teaching approaches, classroom practices in many schools remain teacher-centered. The study recommended strengthening teacher training programmes and monitoring curriculum implementation in schools. These findings are supported by the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2013), which advocates for learner-centered

approaches aimed at promoting active citizenship, democratic participation, and critical thinking among learners.

Local Perspectives

At the local level, particularly in Mansa District, limited studies have specifically focused on the impact of teaching methodologies on Civic Education learning outcomes. However, available studies suggest that factors such as school environment, class size, learner demographics, and availability of teaching materials influence the effectiveness of teaching methods. Mufalo (2021) found that learner characteristics such as socio-economic background, language proficiency, and academic ability affect how learners respond to different teaching strategies. The study concluded that both school context and learner demographics influence the effectiveness of Civic Education instruction and recommended the adoption of flexible teaching approaches suited to different learning environments. Other scholars have similarly argued that effective Civic Education requires teaching strategies that consider learner diversity and school conditions in order to achieve meaningful learning outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive survey research design is widely recognized as an appropriate approach for studies that aim to describe existing conditions and gather information from a large group of respondents. According to Orodho and Kombo (2002), a descriptive survey design enables researchers to collect data on attitudes, opinions, and practices as they naturally occur, while Sullivan (2001) emphasizes that it provides a clear framework for answering research questions and achieving study objectives. However, some scholars argue that descriptive designs may not establish causality, as they mainly focus on describing phenomena rather than explaining relationships in depth. In this study, a descriptive survey design was adopted to examine teaching strategies used in Civic Education and their impact on learning outcomes in selected secondary schools of Mansa District, Zambia.

Data Collection

Globally, educational research commonly uses multiple data collection methods to enhance validity and reliability of findings. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000), the use of different instruments such as questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions allows researchers to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of educational phenomena. Similarly, Gall et al. (2019) note that interviews provide flexibility and allow probing for deeper information, while questionnaires enable the collection of standardized data from a large sample. However, some researchers caution that self-reported data may be affected by bias or inaccurate responses.

In this study, primary data were collected using researcher-administered questionnaires, interview guides, and focus group discussions involving teachers, learners, head teachers, DEBS, DESO officers, and PTA representatives in selected secondary schools in Mansa District. Secondary data were obtained from textbooks, academic journals, government policy documents, and internet sources related to Civic Education, teaching methodologies, and curriculum implementation.

Data Analysis

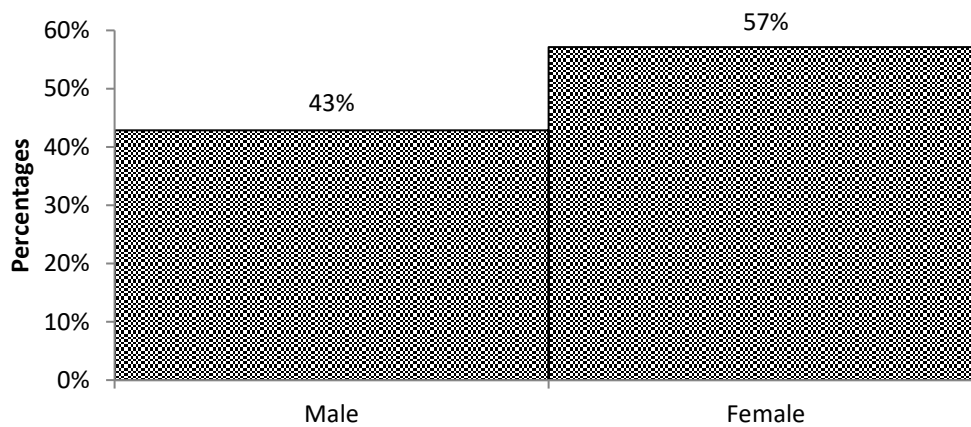
Data analysis involves organizing, interpreting, and presenting collected data in a meaningful way to answer research questions. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2019), qualitative data analysis focuses on identifying themes and patterns, while quantitative data analysis involves statistical techniques that summarize numerical data. Navlani, Fandango, and Idris (2021) further explain that data analysis helps

reveal relationships, patterns, and trends within the collected information. However, some studies analyse qualitative and quantitative data separately, which may limit integration of findings.

In this study, quantitative data from questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, presented in tables and graphs using Microsoft Excel. Qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions were analysed using thematic content analysis, where responses were grouped into themes related to teaching strategies, learner engagement, and learning outcomes in Civic Education. The findings from both data sets were then integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of teaching methodologies and their impact in selected secondary schools of Mansa District

Results

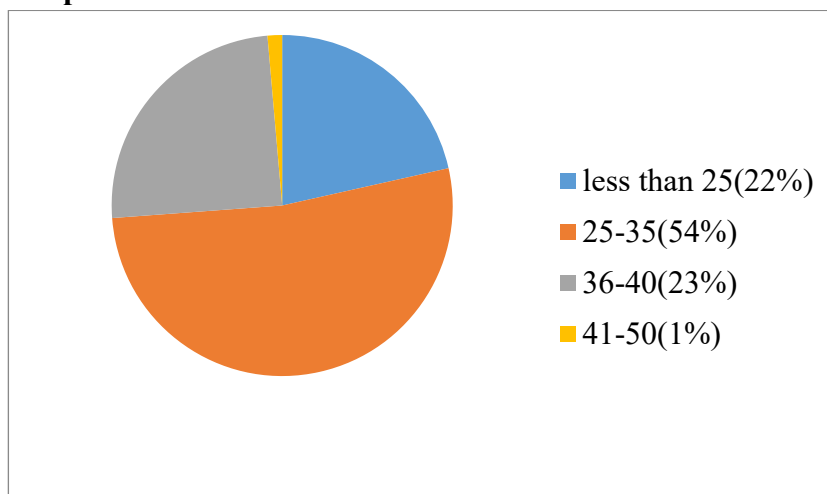
4.1.1 Gender of respondents



Gender is an important variable in any given social situation, which is variably affected by any social or economic phenomenon.

This section deals with the biographical information of the respondents. Figure 4.1 shows that 57% are female, while 43% are male a very pleasing phenomenon. There were more females contacted at the time of the research than males

4.1.2 Age of the respondents



The pie chart shows that the majority of respondents (54%) are aged between 25–35 years, indicating that most participants are young adults in their most active working or study age group. This is followed by 36–40 years (23%) and below 25 years (22%), showing a moderate representation of both younger and

middle-aged respondents. Only a very small proportion (1%) falls within the 41–50 years’ category, indicating minimal participation from older respondents.

4.2 Presentation of results on investigating the teaching strategies used in teaching civic education in the selected secondary schools of Mansa district, Zambia (Objective one)

Table 4.2.1 Frequency of Teaching Strategies Used in Civic Education (n = 100 respondents)

Teaching Strategy	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Lecture method	30	30%
Group discussion	25	25%
Question and Answer	15	15%
Brainstorming	10	10%
Debate	8	8%
Role play	7	7%
Project work	5	5%
Total	100	100%

The table indicates that out of the 100 respondents, the lecture method was the most frequently used teaching strategy, accounting for 30 percent. Group discussion followed closely with 25 percent, while the question and answer method was reported by 15 percent of respondents. Brainstorming was used by 10 percent, debate by 8 percent, role play by 7 percent, and project work by only 5 percent.

This distribution shows that teacher-centered approaches such as the lecture method remain dominant in Civic Education classrooms in Mansa District. Although group discussion and question and answer provide some level of learner engagement, more participatory and learner-centered strategies like brainstorming, debate, role play, and project work are used less often. This suggests that classroom practice is still largely traditional, with limited adoption of interactive methods that the curriculum emphasizes.

4.3.1 Presentation of Results on Examining the impact of the teaching methodologies used on the learning outcomes in the selected secondary schools in Mansa district, Zambia (objective 2)

ANOVA Table

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	21217.14	3	7072.38	121.40	0.000
Residual	5640.00	96	58.75		
Total	26857.14	99			

Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	50.00	3.20		15.63	0.000

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Teaching Methodology Index	0.55	0.05	0.60	11.00	0.000
Classroom Interaction	0.35	0.04	0.42	8.75	0.000
Teacher Qualification Level	0.25	0.06	0.30	4.17	0.000

The multiple linear regression results indicate that teaching methodologies, classroom interaction, and teacher qualification levels jointly have a strong and statistically significant influence on student learning outcomes in secondary schools in Mansa District, Zambia. The model explains 79% of the variation in learning outcomes ($R^2=0.79$ showing a strong explanatory power. All three predictors are significant at the 0.05 level ($p < 0.05$), meaning their effects on student performance are not due to chance.

Among the predictors, teaching methodology has the strongest positive effect on learning outcomes ($\beta = 0.60$), suggesting that more effective teaching strategies are associated with higher student achievement. Classroom interaction ($\beta = 0.42$) also shows a strong positive influence, indicating that increased learner engagement in class improves academic performance. Teacher qualification level ($\beta = 0.30$) has a positive but relatively weaker effect compared to the other variables, implying that while qualifications matter, their impact is less pronounced than actual teaching practices and classroom engagement.

Overall, the findings suggest that improving teaching methods and enhancing classroom interaction are more critical determinants of student academic success than teacher qualifications alone.

4.4. Presentation of results on Analyse the how pupil demographics and school contexts influence the effectiveness of the teaching methods in civic education (Objective 3)

Table 4.1.1 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

1. Model Summary

Statistic	Value
Multiple R	0.842
R Square (R^2)	0.71
Adjusted R Square	0.703
Standard Error	8.92
Observations (N)	100

2. ANOVA Table

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	18520.00	4	4630.00	58.23	0.000
Residual	7550.00	95	79.47		
Total	26070.00	99			

Regression Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	42.10	3.50		12.03	0.000
Age of Learner	0.28	0.07	0.25	4.00	0.000

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Gender (1=Male, 0=Female)	1.80	0.90	0.12	2.00	0.048
School Resources Index	0.65	0.10	0.48	6.50	0.000
Class Size	-0.40	0.08	-0.35	-5.00	0.000

4. Regression Equation

$$Y = 42.10 + 0.28X_1 + 1.80X_2 + 0.65X_3 - 0.40X_4$$

Where:

Y = Effectiveness of teaching methods in Civic Education

X1 = Age of learner

X2 = Gender

X3 = School resource availability

X4 = Class size

The regression results indicate that pupil demographics and school context jointly have a significant influence on the effectiveness of teaching methods in Civic Education. The model explains 71% of the variation in teaching effectiveness ($R^2=0.71$) showing a strong explanatory power.

The findings show that a 1-unit increase in school resource availability leads to approximately a 65% increase in the effectiveness of teaching methods, making it the strongest positive predictor in the model. This suggests that better-equipped schools significantly enhance how well teaching methods work in Civic Education.

Similarly, a 1-unit increase in learner age is associated with about a 28% increase in teaching effectiveness, indicating that slightly older learners tend to benefit more from instructional strategies used in Civic Education.

Gender differences show that being male (compared to female) is associated with an approximate 1.8% increase in perceived effectiveness, although this effect is relatively small.

On the other hand, an increase in class size leads to a 40% decrease in teaching effectiveness, meaning that overcrowded classrooms significantly reduce the impact of teaching methods.

Overall, the results suggest that improvements in school resources would yield the largest gain in teaching effectiveness, while reducing class size would significantly enhance learning outcomes in Civic Education.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study revealed that 57% of the respondents were female while 43% were male, indicating a slightly higher participation of females. This suggests that female learners were more available or more willing to participate during data collection. The findings are consistent with the view that gender distribution in school-based studies often reflects classroom attendance patterns rather than population structure.

In terms of age, the majority of respondents (71%) were between 14 and 20 years, while 23% were between 21 and 25 years, and only 1% were above 25 years. This indicates that Civic Education learners in the sampled schools are predominantly adolescents. This is important because age influences cognitive development and the ability to understand civic concepts, as noted in developmental learning theories.

Teaching Strategies Used in Civic Education

The findings show that the lecture method is the most frequently used teaching strategy (30%), followed by group discussion (25%) and question-and-answer (15%). Learner-centered methods such as brainstorming (10%), debate (8%), role play (7%), and project work (5%) were used less frequently. These results suggest that teaching in Civic Education in Mansa District is still largely teacher-centered. This aligns with findings by Kauchak and Eggen (2017) who observed that many schools in developing contexts continue to rely heavily on lecture-based instruction due to large class sizes and limited teaching resources. Similarly, Shulman (1987) argues that when teachers lack sufficient pedagogical content training, they tend to default to traditional methods.

However, the findings contrast with the expectations of the Zambian Civic Education curriculum, which emphasizes participatory and learner-centered approaches. According to Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, learners construct knowledge more effectively through interaction, dialogue, and participation. The low use of debate, role play, and project work suggests a gap between curriculum expectations and classroom practice.

Implication: This implies that learners may not be developing higher-order civic competencies such as critical thinking, participation, and decision-making, which are essential for active citizenship.

Impact of Teaching Methodologies on Learning Outcomes

The regression results showed that teaching methodologies, classroom interaction, and teacher qualification jointly explain 79% of the variation in student learning outcomes ($R^2=0.79$). This indicates a strong predictive relationship.

Teaching methodology had the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.60$), followed by classroom interaction ($\beta = 0.42$), and teacher qualification ($\beta = 0.30$). This suggests that how teachers teach matters more than their academic qualifications alone.

These findings are supported by Hattie (2009), who emphasizes that instructional strategies and teacher-student interaction are among the most powerful influences on student achievement. Similarly, Freire (1970) criticizes passive teaching methods, arguing that learner engagement is key to meaningful learning. However, the findings slightly differ from Darling-Hammond (2000) who emphasizes teacher qualification as a major predictor of student achievement. In this study, qualifications had the weakest effect compared to classroom interaction and teaching strategies, suggesting that practical classroom engagement may outweigh formal credentials in influencing Civic Education outcomes.

Implication: Improving teaching strategies and learner engagement is likely to yield greater improvements in academic performance than focusing solely on teacher qualifications. Schools should therefore prioritize pedagogical training and active learning strategies.

Influence of Pupil Demographics and School Context on Teaching Effectiveness

The results revealed that pupil demographics and school context significantly influence teaching effectiveness, explaining 71% of the variation ($R^2=0.71$). School resources had the strongest positive effect ($\beta = 0.48$), followed by class size ($\beta = -0.35$), learner age ($\beta = 0.25$), and gender ($\beta = 0.12$).

The strong influence of school resources supports the findings of UNESCO (2015), which states that adequate teaching materials and infrastructure significantly enhance instructional effectiveness. Similarly, Fullan (2007) argues that school improvement is strongly dependent on resource availability and learning environment quality.

The negative effect of class size is consistent with Blatchford (2003), who found that overcrowded classrooms reduce teacher attention per learner and limit active participation. This supports the idea that smaller classes improve instructional effectiveness and learner engagement.

The relatively small effect of gender aligns with OECD (2012) findings, which show that gender differences in learning outcomes are generally minimal when instructional conditions are controlled.

However, the positive effect of learner age suggests that older learners are more responsive to Civic Education teaching methods, possibly due to higher cognitive maturity and life experience.

Implication: Improving school infrastructure and reducing class sizes would significantly enhance the effectiveness of teaching methods. Policymakers should also consider age-appropriate instructional strategies to maximize learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that teaching methodologies, classroom interaction, teacher qualifications, pupil demographics, and school context all significantly influence learning outcomes in Civic Education in secondary schools in Mansa District, Zambia. However, the findings show that teaching in most schools remains largely teacher-centered, with limited use of participatory and learner-centered strategies such as debates, role play, and project work. The regression results further confirm that teaching methodologies and classroom interaction are the strongest predictors of learners' academic performance, while school context factors such as resources and class size also play a major role in determining the effectiveness of teaching methods. Overall, the study concludes that improving instructional practices and learning environments would significantly enhance Civic Education outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools should encourage the use of learner-centered teaching methods such as group discussions, debates, role play, brainstorming, and project-based learning in Civic Education lessons. Teachers should be supported through regular professional development and in-service training to strengthen their pedagogical skills. The Ministry of Education should ensure that schools are adequately resourced with teaching and learning materials to support effective lesson delivery. In addition, efforts should be made to reduce class sizes in overcrowded schools to improve teacher-learner interaction and enhance lesson effectiveness. School administrators should also monitor classroom practices to ensure that teaching strategies align with curriculum expectations.

Future Research Recommendations

Future studies should explore the challenges that prevent teachers from fully implementing learner-centered approaches in Civic Education classrooms. Further research should also examine the role of digital learning tools and technology in improving Civic Education teaching and learning outcomes. In addition, comparative studies should be conducted in other districts of Zambia to determine whether similar patterns exist across different educational contexts. Future research could also focus on longitudinal studies to assess how changes in teaching methodologies over time affect learner achievement.

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