



Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Civic Education: A Case Study of Mporokoso and Bweupe Primary Schools in Mporokoso District, Northern Zambia.

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Abstract: The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) introduced in Zambia represents a significant shift from traditional content-based teaching to a learner-centered approach that emphasizes the acquisition of practical skills, values, and competencies. In Civic Education, CBC aims to develop responsible citizens who are knowledgeable about governance, democracy, human rights, and social responsibility. Despite its potential benefits, the implementation of CBC in rural schools continues to face numerous challenges. This study investigated the implementation of CBC in Civic Education in Mporokoso and Bweupe Primary Schools in Mporokoso District. A mixed-method research design was employed involving 35 respondents, including DEBS officials, head teachers, teachers, caregivers, and parents. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and observations, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Findings revealed that CBC has enhanced learner participation, creativity, civic awareness, and communication skills. However, challenges such as lack of teaching materials, inadequate teacher training, overcrowded classrooms, and poor infrastructure significantly hinder effective implementation. The study concludes that successful implementation of CBC requires strong institutional support, improved funding, and continuous teacher professional development.

Keywords: Competency-Based Curriculum, Civic Education, Zambia, Curriculum Implementation, Primary Schools

I. Introduction

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping the social, economic, and political development of any nation. In Zambia, educational reforms have been introduced to align the education system with global trends and to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. One such reform is the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), which emphasizes the development of practical skills, values, and competencies rather than mere theoretical knowledge.

The traditional curriculum focused heavily on memorization and examinations, which often limited learners' ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations. In contrast, CBC promotes learner-centered approaches that encourage active participation, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving. This transformation is essential in preparing learners for the modern workforce and societal challenges.

Civic Education, as a key subject under CBC, plays an important role in developing responsible citizens. It equips learners with knowledge of governance, democracy, human rights, and civic responsibilities. However, the successful implementation of CBC depends on the availability of resources, teacher preparedness, and supportive learning environments, which are often lacking in rural areas such as Mporokoso District.

II. Problem Statement

Despite the adoption of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Zambia as a strategy to improve the quality and relevance of education, its implementation remains inconsistent, particularly in rural areas. Schools in Mporokoso District, such as Mporokoso and Bweupe Primary Schools, face several challenges that hinder effective implementation of CBC.



These challenges include inadequate teaching and learning materials, insufficient teacher training in CBC methodologies, overcrowded classrooms, and poor school infrastructure. Such conditions make it difficult for teachers to effectively apply learner-centered approaches required under CBC.

As a result, learners may fail to acquire essential competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and civic awareness. If these challenges are not addressed, the intended objectives of CBC may not be achieved, particularly in underserved communities.

This study was therefore conducted to examine the implementation of CBC in Civic Education and to identify strategies that can improve its effectiveness in rural primary schools.

III. Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Civic Education in selected primary schools in Mporokoso District. Specifically, the study aimed to:

Examine how CBC is being implemented in Civic Education

Identify the challenges affecting the implementation of CBC

Assess the successes achieved through CBC implementation

Suggest strategies for improving the implementation of CBC

These objectives were designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of both the strengths and weaknesses of CBC implementation. By addressing these objectives, the study contributes to improving educational practices and policy implementation, particularly in rural areas where challenges are more pronounced.

IV. Methodology

The study employed a descriptive case study design that combined both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. This mixed-method approach was appropriate as it enabled the researcher to collect both numerical data and detailed insights into participants' experiences regarding CBC implementation.

The study was conducted in Mporokoso District in Northern Zambia, focusing on Mporokoso Primary School and Bweupe Primary School. The target population consisted of 350 individuals, including teachers, school administrators, parents, caregivers, and DEBS officials.

A sample of 35 respondents was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used to select key informants such as head teachers and DEBS officials, while random sampling was used for teachers and parents.

Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and observations. Questionnaires provided quantitative data, while interviews and observations provided qualitative insights. Data analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and thematic analysis.

Ethical considerations such as confidentiality, informed consent, and voluntary participation were strictly observed.

V. Presentation of Findings

The table shows that the study had a balanced representation of male and female respondents. Female respondents slightly outnumbered males, accounting for 51% of the sample. This balanced distribution enhances the credibility and reliability of the study findings, as it captures diverse perspectives from both



genders. Gender balance is important in educational research because it ensures that the experiences and views of both male and female stakeholders are considered.

Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	49%
Female	18	51%
Total	35	100%

Challenges In Cbc Implementation

Challenge	Percentage
Lack of teaching materials	91%
Inadequate teacher training	86%
Overcrowded classrooms	86%
Poor infrastructure	80%
Limited parental involvement	71%

The findings indicate that lack of teaching materials is the most significant challenge affecting CBC implementation. Without adequate resources, teachers struggle to deliver lessons effectively. Inadequate teacher training also limits the ability of teachers to apply CBC methodologies. Overcrowding and poor infrastructure further create an uncondusive learning environment.

Successes Of Cbc

Success Area	Frequency	Percentage
Learner participation	34	97%
Creativity	28	80%
Civic awareness	30	86%
Communication skills	27	77%

Despite the challenges, CBC has led to significant improvements in learner participation and engagement. Learners are more active in class and demonstrate improved communication and critical thinking skills. This shows that CBC is effective when properly implemented.

VI. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the Competency-Based Curriculum has positively influenced teaching and learning in Civic Education. Increased learner participation and engagement suggest that CBC promotes active learning and skill development. These findings are consistent with previous studies which highlight the benefits of learner-centered approaches.

However, the study also revealed significant challenges, particularly in rural schools. Lack of teaching materials, inadequate teacher training, and poor infrastructure hinder effective implementation. These challenges limit the ability of teachers to fully apply CBC methodologies.

Overcrowded classrooms further complicate the situation by reducing interaction and limiting group work activities. This affects the development of competencies such as collaboration and communication.

Therefore, while CBC has the potential to improve the quality of education, its success depends on adequate support systems. Without sufficient resources and training, the benefits of CBC may not be fully realized.



VII. Conclusion

The study concludes that the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Civic Education in Mporokoso District has produced positive outcomes, particularly in improving learner participation, creativity, and civic awareness. However, several challenges continue to hinder effective implementation.

Key challenges include inadequate teaching materials, poor infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, and limited teacher preparedness. These factors reduce the effectiveness of CBC and limit the achievement of its objectives.

Therefore, while CBC is a progressive educational reform, its success depends on addressing these challenges through improved support and investment.

Recommendations

- Government should provide adequate teaching and learning materials
- Continuous teacher training should be strengthened
- School infrastructure should be improved
- Parental involvement should be enhanced
- Monitoring and evaluation systems should be strengthened

These recommendations aim to improve the implementation of CBC and ensure that learners acquire the intended competencies.

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