

DECLARATION

I, Mubita Kaiko, declare that this dissertation has been written by me. All quotations have been distinguished by quotation marks. The sources of all materials referred to have been specifically acknowledged, and the dissertation has never been accepted in any previous award for a Degree in this or any other University.

Signed -----

Date -----

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APPROVAL

This dissertation of MUBITA KAIKO is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of Masters Degree of Education in Geography Education by the University of Zambia.

Signed:

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DEDICATION

To my beloved Lweendo Maila and the entire Mubita family. Your love, inspiration and encouragement in the deepest hours of need to my social and academic endeavours has seen me this far.

May God bless you all.

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Abstract

This study looked at the perceptions of environmental hazards and disasters in Zambia's college geography education. The problem investigated by this study was that lecturers and students took what they taught and learnt respectively on the topic of 'environmental hazards and disasters' for granted without critically thinking about the worthiness and appropriateness of the topic in their environment. Such perceivers may not be applying hazards and disasters to relevant aspects of their lives too. Against this back round, this study sought to look at the perceptions of environmental hazards and disasters among lecturers and students of Geography in diploma colleges of Zambia. Three objectives guided the study, namely, to find out environmental hazards and disasters which were common in Zambia; to explore the views of lecturers and students on environmental hazards and disasters in college geography education and to assess elements that lecturers and students felt should be included or excluded in the topic of 'environmental hazards and disasters'.

The study used descriptive and survey research designs. The sample comprised 122 respondents from two colleges of education affiliated to the University of Zambia, namely, David Livingstone College of Education and Kwame Nkrumah College of Education. The study sampled 110 geography students and 12 geography lecturers as respondents following purposive sampling. The data collected was analyzed manually and came up with frequency tables. Qualitative data was analyzed qualitatively.

The results showed that many respondents (74%) felt that the topic on environmental hazards and disasters in college geography should mainly concentrate on those hazards and disasters common to Zambia. These include among others, floods, environmental pollution and drought. This was for the reason that concentrating on hazards and disasters common to Zambia would help solve problems affecting our immediate environment. The respondents felt that learning environmental hazards and disasters in college geography equipped learners with knowledge on mitigation measures, response strategies, recovery and preparedness in case disasters struck. The study also found that certain approaches or methods were preferred by respondents in the teaching and learning of environmental hazards and disasters in college geography. The suggested approaches and methods included field work, discussion, simulation and drills, among others. The study revealed that certain stakeholders should be involved in the full exploitation of the topic on hazards and disasters at some

point. This would bridge the gap existing between geography and society. The suggested stakeholders include civil society organizations, the public sector, government, community and parents.

Moreover, the study found that some of the topics which were being taught at that time under environmental hazards and disasters in college geography were alien to Zambia. Topics such as hurricanes, tornados, avalanche so on should not be concentrated upon if the topic on environmental hazards and disasters was to be responsive to the needs of our local environment. Instead, the study found that the study on environmental hazards and disasters in college geography should include issues on mitigation measures, preparedness, fires, stakeholder involvement, industrial accidents and others common to Zambia.

The study recommends that the topic on environmental hazards and disasters in college geography should concentrate on aspects common to the Zambian environment if it was to provide solutions to problems within our environment. The study also recommends that the gap between geography and society should be narrowed by involving some stake holders to fully exploit the topic on environmental hazards and disasters in college geography. Also, practical approaches should be employed in content delivery unde this topic. The study also recommends that the content on environmental hazards and disasters should undergo regular revision in order to include contemporary issues if it was to be meaningful. At the most, the study on environmental hazards and disasters could even stand on its own or be taught as a separate subject as the case is in countries like Bangladesh, Australia and Malaysia.