

**CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION OF CAREER PATH-WAYS IN  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LUSAKA DISTRICT: A CASE OF THE  
2013 COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

**BY**

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of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in  
Curriculum Studies**

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## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I, **Kalumbu Manyika**, hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own original work and has not been previously submitted for award of any degree at the University of Zambia or any other University.

Signature.....

Date.....

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL**

This dissertation by **Kalumbu Manyika** has been approved as fulfilling the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Curriculum Studies at the University of Zambia.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the extent to which public secondary schools effectively implemented the 2013 curriculum framework in line with the provisions and guidelines of the curriculum framework career pathways in Lusaka district, Zambia. Although the Ministry of Education indicated that the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (ZECF) of 2023 was a product of an evaluation of the ZECF 2013 implementation process, there was seemingly no independent research or evaluation that provided the details on the extent to which public secondary schools adhered to the specific career pathways as outlined in the ZECF of 2023. This is a qualitative study which employed a case study research design where data was collected from a sample of 129 participants that included 48 learners, 48 Subject Teachers, 6 Guidance and Counselling Teachers, 12 Head of Departments, 8 Senior Education Standard Officers and 1 Assistant Director who were all purposively sampled. Besides, semi-structured interviews and focused group discussions guides were used to collect data from the participants. Data was equally collected through document analysis of the school curriculum in every school sampled. Data was analysed thematically. The findings of the study revealed that in Lusaka district, out of the 6 (six) sampled schools only 1 (one) school fully adhered to the curriculum guidelines and provision. In addition, it was also established that most of the schools that were sampled faced inherent difficulties during the implementation of the curriculum especially the combined schools. Therefore, it concluded that the general level of adherence in the implementation of the ZECF 2013 was approximately around 66.7%. Besides, in curriculum theory and practice, there is a symbiotic relationship between a fully-fledged school and effective implementation of ZECF 2013. The Ministry of Education should upscale budget allocation to secondary schools, in order to enhance effective implementation of various curriculum career pathways.

***Keywords:*** curriculum, career pathways, curriculum implementation, curriculum framework, public secondary school.

## **DEDICATION**

This academic work is a dedication to my family for their role prior to my admission and during my postgraduate studies.

To my mother, Patricia Nakamwi Sikama Manyika, for the positive encouragement and moral support throughout the period of my postgraduate studies.

I also dedicate this work to my late father Jonas Manyika, for his insistence and encouragement to me to pursue an advanced qualification at any level of the education system in order to broaden the spectrum of my educational knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Perhaps, I could only wish that my father was around and see the little effort, I have made in my postgraduate studies.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.

<b>CDC</b>	:	Curriculum Development Centre
<b>CPD</b>	:	Continuous Professional Development
<b>DCD</b>	:	Directorate of Curriculum Development
<b>DEBS</b>	:	District Education Board Secretary
<b>DOS</b>	:	Directorate of Standards
<b>HoD</b>	:	Head of Department
<b>HQ</b>	:	Headquarters
<b>MEE</b>	:	Ministry of Education and Employment.
<b>MESTVTEE</b>	:	Ministry of Education Science, Technology, Vocational, Training and Early Education.
<b>MoE</b>	:	Ministry of Education
<b>MoGE</b>	:	Ministry of General Educations
<b>SEOGC</b>	:	Senior Education Officer Guidance and Counselling
<b>SESO</b>	:	Senior Education standards officer
<b>UNESCO</b>	:	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>ZECF</b>	:	Zambia Education Curriculum Framework

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Overview**

This chapter covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, operational definition of terms and the summary of the chapter.

### **1.2 Background**

Educational aims, goals and objectives are attained by means of a policy framework identified as a curriculum (Mulenga, 2018). In 2013, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, Vocational Training and Early Education, adopted a competency-based curriculum, which signified a complete paradigm shift in the Zambian education system as noted by Kabombwe (2019); Luhanga (2019); Lubasi (2019); Zulu (2019). The curriculum framework diverted the education system focus of its assessment approach from a content-based (objective based curriculum) to an outcome-based curriculum (competency-based curriculum) with a focus on learner's acquisition of clearly stated competencies (Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2013). Besides, Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) explained that the rationale of the paradigm shift emanated from a background of systemic failings in the Zambian education system which were hardly effectively and efficiently attended to. In line with the basic practices associated with a competency-based curriculum, the curriculum framework projected sustainable growth through the education system and induced an array of dynamic pedagogical approaches and career pathways as noted by the Mulenga and Ng'andu (2022).

Primarily, in the Republic of Malta the competency-based curriculum was envisioned to induce economic opportunities which could be exploited by both school leavers and school dropouts through innovation and entrepreneurship as explained by Ministry of Education and Employment (2012). Correspondingly, the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework through its two career pathways projected to emancipate school leavers and school dropouts from the social, economic and psychological bondage by providing clarity on the structure of career technical programs of study that would increase the likelihood of post-secondary completion (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). However, it is worth to mention that curriculum career

pathways were organised around a sequence of competencies and learner achievement that were anticipated towards the attainable and incremental steps in higher levels of education and work (Kasebusha & Banda, 2021).

Further, at secondary level the 2013 curriculum framework configured the Career pathways as a collection of structured and connected curriculum approaches accompanied by support programme services that were intended to enable learners to advance personal interests on a specific professional career as outlined by M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E (2013). Each structural orientation within the curriculum framework was designed to prepare learners to progress to the next level of career advancement that would assume individual learner’s interest and projected an individual with capabilities that would facilitate the acquisition of relevant knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (M.E.E, 2012). Thus, the Zambian curriculum outlined two broad categories of the curriculum Career pathways which were the Academic and Vocational as explained by Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019).

Furthermore, in both Malta and Zambia the broad reorganisation and reorientation of the curriculum framework into two career pathways were intended to inform learners that both career pathways were worthwhile options, depending on individual needs and interest as outlined by Ministry of Education and Employment (2012); M E.S.T.V.T.E.E (2013). For example, in the table below, an illustration of the eight (8) sub-type of the 2013 curriculum career pathways is provided.

**Table 1.1: ZECF (2013) Curriculum Career Pathways.**

Category	Type (Sub-type)	Compulsory Subject	Optional Subject	Maximum Number of Subject
Academic Career Pathway	Social Science Oriented Curriculum	Mathematics English Language Biology, Science Geography/History Civic Education Literature in English	Zambian Languages Religious Education Foreign languages	8
Academic Career Pathway	Business Studies Oriented Curriculum	Mathematics English Language Biology, Science Commerce, principles of Accounts Civic Education	Religious Education Geography/history Zambian Language Literature in English	8

Academic Career Pathway	Natural Science Oriented Curriculum	Mathematics English Language Chemistry, Biology Physics, Civic Education Additional Mathematics	Religious Education Geography/history Zambian Language	8
Vocational career Pathway	Agriculture Curriculum	Agricultural Science English Language Mathematics Science Civic Education	Religious Education/ Zambian Language Geography / History	7
Vocational career Pathway	Technology Curriculum	Design and Technology/ Computer Studies English Language Mathematics Science, Biology	Zambian Language Religious Education/ Civic Education Geography/ History	7
Vocational career Pathway	Performing and Creative Arts Curriculum	Arts and Design/ Music Education English Language Mathematics Biology, Civic Education	Religious Education/ Zambian Language Geography / History	7
Vocational career Pathway	Home Economics and Hospitality	Fashion and Fabrics/ Food and Nutrition/ Home Management English Language Mathematics Science Biology	Zambian Languages Religious Education/ Civic Education Geography/ History	7
Vocational career Pathway	Physical Education and Sports	Physical Education English Language Mathematics Civic Education Biology	Zambian Language Religious Education/Geography/ History	7

NB: Table 1.1 shows that Academic Pathway include, Business Studies, Social Science and Natural Science and the Vocational Pathway include, Technology, Performing and Creative Arts, Agricultural Science, Physical Education and Sports and Home Economics and Hospitality.

In view of the above it is important to note that, the Zambian government underscored that learners reserve the right to choose the Career pathway of their choice based on their personal interest and capability as noted by Kabombwe (2019). It is therefore important to underscore that principally, the prime intent of the ZECF (2013) was to ensure that the competency-based

curriculum compelled curriculum implementers to regard learners as future workforce and ensure that positive attitudes towards excellence, commitment, responsibility, flexibility and entrepreneurship form part of the learning process. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework in Zambia was accompanied by the provision of career guidance and counselling (M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E, 2013). The career guidance and counselling services were intended to alert learners with full information on the specific details, rationale and orientation of the curriculum, in order to ensure that the school produces a well-balanced individual who was to fit in society and contribute positively at both personal and societal levels MoE (2011).

Moreover, M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E, (2013); M.E.E, (2012) mentioned that the competency-based curriculum was equally intended to respond to learners growing academic disinterest through the link between academic subjects and professional career. However, it is also important to appreciate that the curriculum required schools to provide authentic learning and assessment contexts that bridged the gap between theory and practice in the real-world experience of work (Rwanda Basic Education Board, 2022). For example, the Malta institute of education noted that in both New Zealand and United States of America, academic disinterest remained a major driver in school drop-outs, i.e., in USA over 80 percent of school drop outs mentioned that having more authentic learning opportunities could have kept them in school (M.E.E, 2012).

Additionally, although the Ministry of Education recognised the vocational subjects outlined under the vocational path-way as cardinal, the Government of the Republic of Zambia required every institution of learning to offer vocational subjects as part of the individual school curriculum during the implementation as stated by Kabombwe (2019). Nevertheless, Changwe and Mwanza (2022) mentioned that the 2013 curriculum framework outlined a framework on the implementation of the subject combination of the curriculum framework career pathways. However, it is important to note that secondary schools reserved the right to implement the curriculum career pathways that comprehensively responded to the immediate needs of the people in a given community through a complete localisation process as asserted by the M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E (2013). Thus, the localisation of the school curriculum remained a preserve of the school administration in adapting the aspects of the curriculum to match the local needs and circumstances.

Conversely, Mwanza (2017); Ng'andu (2022) mentioned that the implementation of a competency-based curriculum has not been free from inherent shortcomings emanating from a

number of technical hitches during the implementation process, the challenges encountered include, the shortage of teaching and learning materials, ignorance of some teachers on the provisions of the competency-based curriculum and the lack of conceptualisation of the competency-based curriculum.

Similarly, in Zambia, various scholars may have conducted research on the benefits and challenges associated with the curriculum implementation process especially the 2013 curriculum framework. In fact, Thomas and Thomas (2009) explained that the shortage of teachers, teaching and learning materials and infrastructure in both public and private schools remained a major obstacle in the comprehensive implementation of the curriculum. Although it is clearly known that the competency-based curriculum is competence oriented, a number of schools experienced challenges in terms human resource and infrastructure, such as Industrial Arts Workshops, Science Laboratories, Art Rooms and Sports facilities that remain central in the demonstration and experiment of various pedagogical instructions (Mandukwini, 2016); (Mpofu, Kakana, Mundeka, Makondo, Muleya & Simui (2021).

In addition, in view of what has been noted in the preceding paragraph, inherent challenges encountered during the implementation of the competency-based curriculum, the efficient and effective implementation of the provisions and guidelines of 2013 curriculum framework may be described as dismal and unattainable as noted by Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019). But then, an extensive and review of scientific research in Zambia provided very limited information pertaining to the extent of adherence to the curriculum framework Career pathway provisions and guidelines in Zambian public secondary schools. In fact. Although the ministry of education could have purported that the development of ZECF 2023 was anchored and guided by the ZECF 2013 evaluation report, it is important to indicate that public accessibility to the evaluation report remained restricted contrary to the principles and core values of the Ministry of Education as outlined in the ZECF 2023. Therefore, conducting an evaluation on the detailed implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework and the extent of the adherence to the provisions of the career pathways in secondary schools remained inevitable.

In summary, it is important to note that the systemic failings in the Zambian education system which were hardly effectively and efficiently attended to over the years, provided the context that remain anchored to drive and connotes a world view of the new trends, strategies and practices, which embraced the Zambian heritage and thoughts that attempted to appropriate social and economic opportunities in the local and national situations. In fact, the policy shift

of 2013 in the education system diverted the education policy focus of its purposive outline from a content-based to a competency-based curriculum (M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E, 2013). However, conducting an evaluation on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum career pathways remained integral in clearly providing adequate and appropriate data around the four broad aspects which included the context, inputs, processes and the outcomes of the education system.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

In Zambia, from 2014, every institution of learning at secondary school level remained with a mandate to actualise both the academic and vocational career pathways through a comprehensive career guidance process (M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E, 2013). But then, the actualisation of the curriculum framework and adherence to the specific guidelines remained a challenge that seemingly undermine national efforts in enhancing learner's achievement and the attainment of educational aims, goals and objectives (Kabombwe, 2019). Mulenga and Ng'andu (2022) mentioned that under-resourcing, shortage of qualified teachers, quality teaching and learning materials in most schools presented a compounding factor that inhibited effective implementation of the curriculum. On the other hand, although the Ministry of Education indicated that the 2023 curriculum framework was a product of an evaluation of the 2013 curriculum framework implementation process, it is imperative to underscore that the said evaluation report is not subject to public access and scrutiny. In fact, there is no independent scientific research that provided the details on the extent to which public secondary schools adhered to the specific career pathways as outlined in the curriculum framework. In view of this, for the reason that curriculum review remains part of the overall curriculum development and implementation process, an evaluation of the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum Framework career pathways remains inevitable to the education system in Zambia, so as to provide empirical data on which future decisions may be made regarding the implementation of the 2023 curriculum framework.

### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the extent to which secondary schools effectively implemented the 2013 curriculum framework in line with the provisions and guidelines of the framework Career Pathways.

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

The objective (s) that guided this study were to:

- i. examine teachers and other education personnel's conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district.
- ii. analyse the attitude of learners, teachers and other educational personnel on the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district.
- iii. establish the prevailing conditions that affected the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district.
- iv. determine the extent to which public secondary schools in Lusaka district adhered to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following question (s):

- i. How did teachers and other educational personnel conceptualise the curriculum framework career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district?
- ii. What was the attitude of learners, teachers and educational personnel towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district?
- iii. What were the prevailing conditions that affected the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district?
- iv. To what extent did public secondary schools in Lusaka district adhere to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation?

## **1.7 Theoretical Framework**

The study was guided by the democratic education theory by John Dewey and the multiple-intelligence theory by Howard Gardner.

The democratic education theory was propounded by John Dewey in 1916 as noted by Brewington (2005). In his theory John Dewey argued that emancipating democracy for national

development requires freeing intelligence for independent effectiveness (Leshkovska & Spaseva, 2016). Consequently, Dewey underscored that the curriculum should reflect and build upon the wider interpretation of knowledge and understanding held by citizens in society at large (Flinders & Thornton, 2013). Besides, the democratic education theory embodies the pedagogical practices and academic experiences in its curriculum, as the measure to strengthen social, economic and political development through active citizen participation at all level of society (Brewing, 2005). Therefore, the school ought to remain a model of democracy where learners need to remain acquainted with the knowledge, skills, values and attitude of democracy in theory and practice.

While education presents socio-cultural and political opportunities for human development, the process of continuing change and reconstruction of the individual experience may only be attainable through a complete deliberate process of applying the democratic education theory which implicates a learner-centred approach in curriculum implementation (Flinders & Thornton, 2013). Thus, the effective implementation of a competency-based curriculum required a strategic engagement of learners in the actualisation of the specific curriculum career-pathways, particularly the issue of subject combination by the teachers and the school authorities, this is in order to ensure clear input from the learners based on personal preference that is well informed and guided.

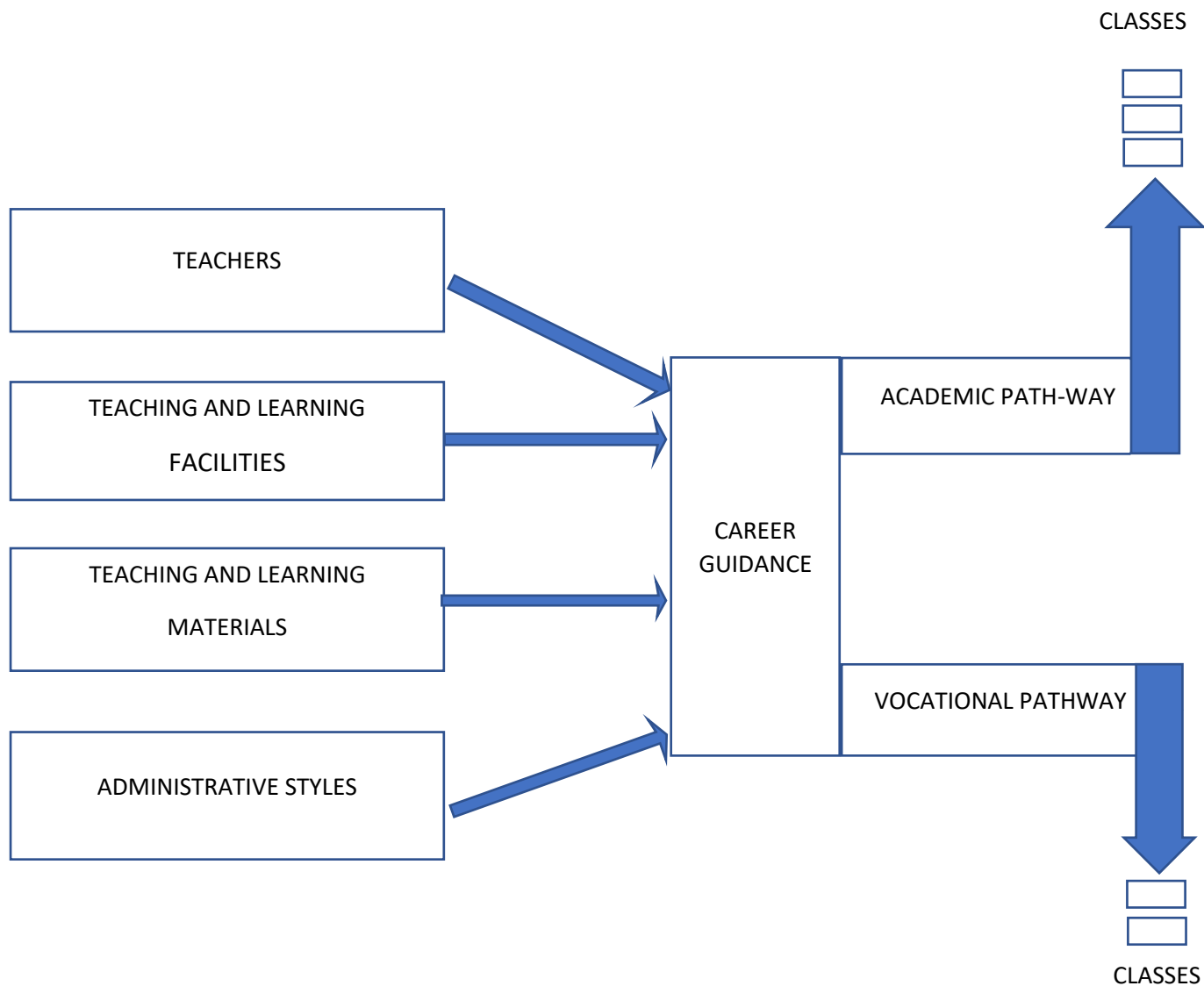
The theory of multiple intelligence was developed in 1983 by Howard Gardner. In his book titled 'Frames of Mind: The theory of multiple intelligences', Gardner challenged the concept of intelligence as a single entity on the basis of the neurological and cultural research (Flinders & Thornton, 2013). Instead, Gardner described human general intelligence in terms of seven relatively independent but interacting intelligences which are linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, intrapersonal and interpersonal (Gardner ,2011). However, naturalist and existential intelligence were later added to his theory (Leshkovska & Spaseva, 2016). In fact, the theory broadened the concept of intelligence by recognising different forms of intelligence that different people possess from a diverse social, economic and political background. Therefore, the curriculum could have only been described as relevant if it responded to the diverse needs of learners from diverse backgrounds taking into account their individual differences and needs in terms of cognitive abilities and interest.

On the other hand, it is important to recognise that both the democratic education theory and multiple intelligence theory provided a complementary role that remains eminent in the

effective and efficient interpretation and implementation of the 2013 competency-based curriculum framework. Leshkovska and Spaseva (2016) stated that both theories provide three fundamental areas in curriculum interpretation and application which are; learner's role, pedagogical approaches and learning experience.

### **1.8 Conceptual Framework.**

The standard practice in ensuring effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum required a due diligence to basic inputs which included the availability of competent and qualified teachers, availability of teaching and learning materials, availability of infrastructure and the efficient and effective management strategies in the education institutions as noted by M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E (2013); Changwe and Mwanza (2022). It is only through a complete consideration of the four independent variables that would have facilitated for the holding of a career guidance and orientation meeting between the school management and newly enrolled pupils to secondary schools. In other ways, at the time of learner enrolment into secondary school, the school authorities through the guidance and counselling office, has a duty to organise and conduct a career guidance engagement meeting on the specific curriculum career pathways. The guidance and counselling meeting with the learners are intended to explain the rationale of each career pathway, giving specific details on subject combination and most importantly making it clear to learners that they reserved the democratic right to choose a specific curriculum career pathway or subject combination. Thus, the school was required to implement the curriculum framework career pathways with a clear input from the learners based on their specific choices of career pathways or subject combination.



*Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework*

### **1.9 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study may help guide the Ministry of Education, the Curriculum Specialists in the Directorate of Curriculum Development, Directorate of Standards, Provincial Education Offices and other major stakeholders about the effective implementation of the curriculum Career pathways. Provide information on specific curriculum achievements and challenges that various secondary schools encounter which generally affect the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambian education system and its implications on national development.

## **1.10 Delimitation**

According to Creswell (2009) delimitation is the extent to which the study fits within a specific perimeter. Therefore, this study was restricted to secondary schools located in Lusaka district, Zambia.

## **1.11 Limitation to the Study**

In this study, all the consented effort to gain access to the (ZECF 2013) evaluation report as outlined in the (ZECF 2023) was unsuccessful, in spite of multiple attempts to engage with the Directorate of Curriculum Development. Therefore, it may not be reasonable to generalise the findings of this study to the rest of the country.

## **1.12. Operational definition of terms**

***Academic Career Pathway:*** This is a theoretical scheme of educational activities that provides specific list of education programmes that have the potential to inspire and direct a learner's future into academic oriented professional and industrial career.

***Competency-Based Curriculum:*** An educational programme that projects to provide a learner with a general capability to choose and apply an integrated combination of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes with intention to realise the task in a certain setting.

***Curriculum Implementation:*** The execution of the curriculum in educational institutions by means of teaching, learning and assessment.

***Educational Personnel:*** refers to an educational officer whose job description in the Ministry of Education is at least beyond the subject teacher i.e. Deputy Head teacher, Head teacher, Senior Education Standard Officer and Assistant Director.

***School Curriculum:*** This refers to all that is planned to enable learners acquire and develop the desired knowledge, skills, values and attitudes as they interact with the curriculum in the school.

***Sub-type:*** This is a subset of the main category of a curriculum, consisting of the actual and specific subject combination representing a specific sphere of curriculum career pathway intent.

***Vocational Career Pathway:*** This is a theoretical scheme of educational activities that provides specific list of education programmes that have the potential to inspire and direct a learner's future into technical oriented career.

### **1.12 Summary**

The prearrangement of this chapter was on the introduction to the study. In this chapter, the background encompassed a contextual summary to the study, the statement of the problem which highlighted the challenges and implications of lack of compliance with the provisions of the curriculum framework, the purpose of the study, research objectives and question provided a rationale and direction to the study. Further, the theoretical framework provided the scientific theories that resonates with the study, the conceptual framework outlined an ideal situation on how curriculum implementation could have been effectively actualised, while the significance of the study explained the implications and usage of the research findings that have been generated from the research, delimitation provided the geographical perimeter where the study was conducted and operational definitions which gave meaning and guidance to the study. The focus of the subsequent chapter is premised on the review of related literature.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Overview**

This chapter contains literature related to the evaluation of the extent to which secondary schools in Zambia effectively implemented the 2013 Curriculum Framework in line with the provisions and guidelines of the curriculum framework career pathways. The literature is reviewed under the following themes, teachers and other educational personnel's conceptualisation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013, the attitude of learners and teachers and other educational personnel's regarding the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways, the prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework career pathways and the extent to which schools adhered to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation.

### **2.2 Conceptualisation of the Curriculum Framework Career Pathways.**

World over since 1972, various countries have adopted the competency-based curriculum as a measure not only to enhance the quality of public education but equally to fundamentally enhance human resource development which remain central in social, political, economic and sustainable development (Obuhatsa, 2020). While there is a sustained zeal towards the competency-based curriculum in various jurisdictions, Chamagosi (2020) asserted that emerging research findings have indicated a number of inherent weaknesses in the competency-based curriculum, including the confusion arising from the definitions and challenges in applying competency concepts to professional education. According to Kelly (2004) the cautions mentioned by the advocates of competency approaches suggest that the failure to clearly and comprehensively conceptualise the rationale and scope of the competency-based curriculum by curriculum implementers remain a big challenge that has the potential to result in expensive frameworks that are unusable and unsupported by stakeholders.

In addition, from the mid-1990s, most Sub-Sahara African countries switched their approach in curriculum development from content based to competency-based curriculum framework. Kabombwe (2019) indicated that from 1997 South Africa adopted a competency-based curriculum in order to diligently respond to the unemployment crisis which was fundamentally as a result of limited skilled labour among the South African citizens especially the black

majority. Some developing countries in Africa moved to a type of education that would aid learners to acquire usable competencies and not just content. According to Bishop (1985); Mulenga (2015) the quality of a curriculum is as good as the quality of its teachers. Thus, teachers' conceptualisation of any curriculum framework remains vital to its effective implementation.

Further, Kubai (2023); Paulo and Tilya (2014) explained that most countries in East Africa introduced the competency-based curriculum as a strategic agent in human development. Thus, in view of the new concept of education, various ministries of education projected developing an education system that would enable citizens of the respectable countries to be sufficiently equipped with the desirable knowledge, skills and attitudes that would enable the majority of the school leavers competently and competitively solve the development challenges facing their respective nation as indicated by Isaboke, Mweru and Wambiri (2021). However, a 2012 study by the Ministry of Education and culture in Tanzania, on the implementation of the competency-based teaching in Tanzanian schools established that a competency-based curriculum had not been well implemented due to limited knowledge and understanding among the key stakeholders in education (Muneja, 2015).

Furthermore, Zambia's bid to attain the Sustainable Development Goal Number Four (4) is evidently clear in its various educational policy frame-works. In view of this the adoption of the Zambian Education Curriculum Framework 2013, completely evoked a paradigm shift in Zambia's education system that took off in January 2014 across the country (Changwe & Mwanza, 2022). However, the observation that the majority of key education stakeholders, especially teachers did not possess the basic understanding of ZECF 2013 could be described as deeply regrettable to both the education system and teaching profession (Luhanga, 2019). Besides, Kabombwe (2019) established that a number of teachers of History in Lusaka district were not conversant with what a competency-based curriculum was. In fact, teachers' lack of knowledge of the competency-based curriculum remains a threat towards the consented efforts ineffective implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework in Zambia. Thus, the issue of limited teacher understanding of the competency-based curriculum remain one of the largest obstacles to the effective curriculum implementation (MoE, 1966).

On the other hand, in ensuring effective curriculum implementation, conceptualisation of the curriculum remains key in teaching and learning. According to Bas and Senturk (2020) the inherent challenges associated with low learner achievement in public schools had much to do

with the calibre and understanding of the strategies of enhancing literacy in most public schools. However, it is important to note that the study by Bas and Senturk (2020) was pre-occupied with teaching methodology in public primary schools. Henceforth, the question on the conceptualisation of the competency-based curriculum by teachers and learners may remain unattended to, not until an evaluation of the implementation of the competency-based curriculum framework career pathways in secondary school was conducted in Zambia.

Correspondingly, Mandukwini (2016) suggested that in order for the Republic of South Africa to attain the Sustainable Development Goal Number (4), curriculum implementers must have had the desired competencies and qualifications that resonates with both theory and practice of the competency-based curriculum. Letshwene and Plessis (2021) proposed that in order to enhance effective implementation of any national curriculum framework in the modern education system, teachers ought to remain identified as the core implementers of the curriculum. Therefore, it is imperative to emphasise that some teachers in Limpopo province needed to put conscious efforts in order to effectively integrate various aspects of the competency-based curriculum during teaching and learning as asserted by Rammuda (2023).

Little or lack of conceptualisation of the competency-based curriculum among curriculum implementers is visibly apparent in lesson preparation. Luhanga (2019) stated that lack of teacher preparedness and training in the new curriculum remained a big obstruction to the effective execution of the competency-based curriculum. In fact, the underlining circumstances that spearheaded sporadic protests among teachers across various public schools in Lusaka district protested of lack of knowledge on best approaches on the competency-based curriculum due to the government failure to engage teachers in the curriculum development process as noted by Mwanza (2017). Consequently, Kabombwe (2019) explained that teachers were found not applying the discovery method during lessons, yet again, such methods remain a requisite in competency-based curriculum.

Additionally, Changwe and Mwanza (2022) observed that even formative assessment during classroom session remained almost nil or negligible in most public secondary schools. In fact, this seemingly suggested that both teachers and educational administrators never adequately conducted assessment to measure learner's progress whether positive or negative. Thus, it was reasonable to suggest that various ministries of education in Africa should provide necessary trainings to teachers to improve the knowledge and skills on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum as noted by Bell (2009).

Similarly, in Limpopo province, most schools could not to adequately implement the competency-based curriculum as indicated by Molepo (2014). For example, the challenges were noted through teacher lesson planning. A similar to the study conducted by Letshwene and Plessis (2021) established that teacher education was not adequately responding to the industrial demands of the education sector which subsequently affected teacher conceptualisation of the curriculum thereby leading to inefficiency and ineffective curriculum implementation. Therefore, Mandukwini (2016) recommended that there was a need for the Ministry of Education in South Africa to introduce short courses to bridge teachers' knowledge gaps about the curriculum.

On the other hand, Assey (2022) mentioned that various studies conducted on compatibility of teaching methods and competency-based curriculum established that curriculum developers, book writers and teachers demonstrated little or no understanding in both the theory and practice of competency-based curriculum. Boahin (2018) mentioned that successful curriculum implementation was largely associated with prior teachers' sufficient instruction to the learner-centred teaching execution in the United Kingdom. However, in Tanzania, it was established that at least (60%) of the secondary school teachers failed to demonstrate basic skills and knowledge necessary in the implementation of the competency-based curriculum as noted by Nkya, Huang and Mwakambungu (2021). This trend remained largely responsible for the failure of the attainment of the educational aims, goals and objectives. In this regard, conducting an evaluation of the ZECF 2013 remained cardinal in reflecting on the attainment of the educational aims, goals and objectives.

In addition, Rammbuda (2023) mentioned that in some rural parts of sub-sahara African countries, little or limited conceptualisation of the rational of the curriculum was largely responsible for poor teaching, especially on how to incorporate some new pedagogical approaches that are central to competency-based curriculum. This proved to be a major setback to effective curriculum implementation as noted by Adu and Ngibe (2014). Consequently, Pale and Amukowa (2020) proposed that teacher education should remain in tandem with the changes of the national curriculum framework in order to ensure effective curriculum implementation. Nevertheless, the context of the research remains peculiar to South Africa. Thus, considering these findings an evaluation of the implementation of curriculum career pathways in selected public secondary schools of Lusaka district with regards to context ought to be a consideration.

Additionally, Assey (2022) suggested that the need to establish the extent to which teachers have been prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum and their abilities to infuse the core competencies in teaching in western Uganda provides an academic argument that conceptualisation of the competency-based curriculum among teachers remain central to effective curriculum implementation. The recommendation from the study was that the government should ensure continuous training and professional development for all teachers in public schools through in-service programs (Komba & Mwandanji, 2015) ;( Opondo, Afwande & Kamau, 2023). It is for this reason that teacher education and professional development are crucial for effective implementation of a curriculum as noted by Isaboke et al (2021). Thus, teacher education and professional development remain paramount in the implementation of all competency- based education programmes.

On the other hand, Mwita, Onyango and Obuba (2022) mentioned that the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in most rural areas of Tanzania have largely remained behind behind, mainly due to limited teacher pedagogical knowledge and limited usage of teaching and learning resources. According to Kinyunyu (2020) the government of Tanzania made significant strides in supporting the effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum through many capacity building programmes conducted by Ministry of Education and culture, with an aim of updating, developing and broadening the knowledge of different stake holders in education sector. However, there is no scientific data that provide statistical information on the relationship between the extent of curriculum conceptualisation and curriculum implementation from most rural parts of Tanzania.

On a summative note, Maswabi (2017) explained that the drivers and instances of ineffective curriculum strategies and the overall implementation process largely remain an accounted for. Besides, a review of the above related literature are in line with what the Ministry of Education (2002) noted as perennial challenges that have largely undermined national effort in assisting the country in attaining prescribed educational goals and objectives mainly due to specific challenges experienced at human resource level in various schools. In fact, it seems the propositions by Komba and Mwandanji (2015); Maswabi (2017); Rammuda (2023); Changwe and Mwanza (2022) that the majority of teachers in public schools lacked basic conceptual understanding and purpose of the competency-based curriculum remain valid. Nevertheless, it is imperative to insist that the conceptualisation of the curriculum provides a primary basis of not only establishing the basis of curriculum evaluation, but even so critical

fundamentals on attitude towards a competency-based curriculum, which are analysed in the subsequent theme.

### **2.3 Attitude on the School Provision of the Curriculum Framework Career Pathways in Secondary Schools.**

The role of a teacher in curriculum implementation remains extremely cardinal in education development. At classroom level teachers play a significant role in ensuring effective teaching and learning Isaboke et al (2021). Nonetheless, the general comportment and personality determine the performance of a teacher in curriculum implementation. Thus, in a situation where the thought, action and feelings around both curriculum theory and practice remains far-fetched among teachers, the general attitude towards curriculum change and new ideas thereof, remain a huge obstruction and detrimental to education standards and the quality of education as mentioned by Adu and Ngibe (2014) . According to Bound et al (2013) attitude denotes the general tendency of interpretation regarded or understood. While the extent of engagement of teachers by the government of any country is largely responsible for driving teacher's attitude towards education, the general attitude of teachers towards the competency-based curriculum established across different countries suggest that most teachers have largely developed a negative attitude towards curriculum implementation due to limited participation in the curriculum development process as mentioned by Mwanza (2017).

In South Africa since 1994, in order to reflect the democratic values and principles contained in the constitution of the republic, the education system has undergone significant curriculum changes as explained by Groenewald and Mpisi (2022). Adu and Ngibe (2014) stressed that the changes into the curriculum dictated an enquiry into teachers' conceptions and beliefs about the curriculum change and its effects on the teaching profession. For example, although some individual teachers may not be against the reforms as much as they may be frustrated with curriculum process, the general attitude towards curriculum changes has the potential to negatively affect effective curriculum implementation as asserted by Molepo (2014). Over the years, a probe by Mutua and Wameru, (2023) into the teaching profession has revealed that studies of curriculum development ought to be part and parcel of the teacher education programme. This is because teachers know the local situation and dynamics essential for successful curriculum implementation (Bas & Senturk, 2020).

On the other hand, it is important to recognise that Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) assumed that a cross-section of the Zambian society considered a competency-based curriculum as largely unproblematic, for the reason that the majority of stakeholders seem to be completely pre-occupied with the professionalism and proficiency of employees through apparent knowledge, skills, values and attitude display at first value, as a product of disciplinary thinking as explained by. Thus, as a measure to facilitate for the acquisition of positive disposition on matters incidental or related to education development in Zambia, the Ministry of Education took necessary steps in engaging various stakeholders on the rationale and scope of a competency-based curriculum as explained by Muleya (2015). For example, Luhanga (2019) stated that using innovative learning strategies and conducting continuous professional development were among the mechanisms employed by the government in order to increase teachers' positive attitude towards the curriculum.

Further, while teacher's beliefs and conceptions determine the success rate of curriculum implementation in any country, as teachers hold certain understandings about the curriculum that are not intended by the policy, it is important to bear in mind the fact that teachers' views and beliefs might not be in line with the educational policy (Adu & Ngibe, 2014). Over the years, at different times teachers could have advocated for improvements, yet again in many curriculum processes teachers have opted to maintain their silence on curriculum reservations mainly due to the centralised approach to curriculum development process (Awuonda, Jung & Lee, 2023); (Taole, 2015). Nevertheless, it is important to mention that the Kenyan curriculum process has not been able to overcome the fundamental problems that have affected credibility in the curriculum process as mentioned by Malillin, Eduardo and Guingab (2021).

In addition, while teachers are the principal agents in curriculum change in south Africa for many years, teachers remain excluded from the changes that were actualised in the curriculum as curriculum implementors never projected that the 1998 educational reforms would improve their teaching and learners' acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitude as noted by Bas and Senturk (2020); Adu and Ngibe (2014). Thus, in Britain, conducting capacity building among the experienced teachers remain one of the most crucial components of curriculum development (Boahin, 2018). Besides, Letshwene and Plessis (2021); Rammubuda (2023) indicated that any effort to change teachers' pedagogical practise ought to be accompanied by a clear acknowledgement of teacher attitude towards the competency-based curriculum.

Teachers' embedded assumptions about teaching must be controlled in order for any curriculum review to achieve its intended outcomes as asserted by Ajani (2023).

Moreover, Rammuda (2023); Mouton, Louw and Strydom (2013) indicated that the periodic changes in the Kenyan education system have over the years affected teachers' education in such a way that teachers remained not well-vested with the specific requirements of curriculum implementation. Thus, this trend has largely been considered as greatly responsible for low learner achievement in the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in most public schools (Groenewald and Mpisi, 2022). For example, Rammuda (2023) mentioned that continuous change in curriculum contributes in poor implementation of the curriculum as a result of new and emerging demands. In other ways, continuous change in curriculum affects the lives, relationships and working patterns of teachers and the educational experiences of the learners as explained by Letshwene and Plessis (2021). This is because to a greater extent the changes that have been actualised in the secondary school curriculum have hardly reflected in the teacher education curriculum framework across the teaching profession (Thayani, 2020).

In competency-based curriculum theory and practice, the attitude of teachers towards the competency-based curriculum is assumed to be significantly average, this is because to a larger extent most in service teachers consider themselves to be professionally efficient and effective in terms of curriculum implementation as stated by Kabombwe (2019). Nevertheless, the limited academic experience implicates the very teachers as largely theoretically dismal on curriculum and pedagogical theories as noted by Ng'andu (2022). Therefore, positive attitude towards the curriculum often times has been denigrated by the very gap between education and practice, as there seem not to be any clear academic leverage that would troubleshoot, effective curriculum implementation in both theory and practice as asserted by Changwe and Mwanza (2022).

Moreover, the anticipation of the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and culture (2000 a) was to re-orient the national curriculum from content-based to competency-based and harmonise theory and practice. According to Komba and Mwandanji (2015), the curriculum framework established the foundation for the learner to acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes from specific educational programmes. Assey (2022) underscored that the competency-based teaching and learning provide an opportunity to learners to acquire knowledge and skills through conducting scientific experiment in a laboratory facility as part of the process of preparing a new set of scientists for the next generation.

In addition, although, Adu and Ngibe (2014) explained that competency-based curriculum may be described as relatively easier to implement provided that any competent and qualified teacher is expected to be well cognisant of the scope and rationale of the curriculum, teacher's resistance may stem from a preference for the old approach and reluctance to adapt to new methodologies. In fact, Ng'andu (2022) asserted that most teachers in Lusaka district could have demonstrated resistance to implementing competency-based curriculum remained an obstacle to its effective implementation as they perceive it to be time-consuming in terms of preparation and instructional materials. Therefore, it is for these reasons that Changwe and Mwanza (2022) proposed that teachers should have knowledge and skills in conducting assessments, integrating assessments into teaching and using effective approaches, techniques and strategies to improve learner's achievement.

Further, from the adoption of the competency-based curriculum by the Tanzania government, the majority of teachers in public schools demonstrated positive attitude towards the competency-based curriculum (Kinyunyu, 2020). However, Komba and Mwandanji (2015) mentioned that a segment of teachers within the teaching service insisted that changing the curriculum to competency-based was completely practically unnecessary. In fact, in the study by Bas and Senturk (2020) it was established that teachers who exercised a positive attitude towards a general paradigm shift during curriculum implementation remained enthusiastic towards curriculum implementation as opposed to the teachers that had generally exercised negative attitude towards a curriculum paradigm shift.

Furthermore, the credibility of the curriculum framework has largely been undermined by the very curriculum development and implementation process Mwita et al (2022). For example, the hasty manner or perhaps the rush in the implementation of the competency-based curriculum raised more negative attitude towards the competency-based curriculum in Zambia as explained by Musilekwa (2019). In fact, Changwe and Mwanza (2022) noted that the development and implementation of the Zambian Education Curriculum Framework 2013 by political party in government seemingly appeared to prioritise narrow partisan interest on the curriculum. Henceforth, this could have largely eroded the credibility of the curriculum framework among teachers in the public service.

Similarly, the pattern of hastiness in the development and implementation of the competency-based curriculum in Zambia, was not different from the situation in Kenya. Mwita et al (2022) explained that the implementation of the 2017 Kenyan education curriculum framework was

hastily done. In fact, the whole curriculum process was hastily crafted and rushed through a pilot done in less than twelve months. Nevertheless, the circumstances prior to the rolling out of the ZECF 2013, could have in some way responsible for putting the introduction of the curriculum into question, especially on capacity and teachers' preparedness to implement the competency-based curriculum as noted by Luhanga (2019). As much as Ministry of Education in Zambia continued to provide and upscale continuous professional development programmes on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum, there still remain a need for more strategic and comprehensive engagement approaches that may assist in addressing both the limited conceptualisation and negative attitude in the country (Changwe & Mwanza, 2022).

Additionally, poor learner engagement is one of the draw backs to effective curriculum implementation. Thus, the government of Zambia stressed that learner engagement on the rationale of the specific career pathways remain integral in diffusing the misunderstandings, anxiety, ignorance and the negative attitude that is associated with specific subject combination in various career pathways MoE (2023). During curriculum implementation prior learner orientation to educational programmes in terms of their meaning, rationale and scope remain an integral aspect of curriculum implementation that is used as an engagement strategy of attending learners' educational needs as key stakeholders in the education system (M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E, 2013).

On summative note, various academic research demonstrated that in many African countries that have adopted the competency-based curriculum model, many stakeholders in the education sector have raised serious policy and practical reservations on the processes pertaining to the competency-based curriculum. For example, in Kenya only 2,000 out of 160, 000 teachers imparting basic education in lower primary school level were trained as noted by Chamagosi (2020). Mwanza (2017), Changwe and Mwanza (2022) mentioned that a large number of teachers in public school demonstrated little or no understanding of the scope and rationale of the competency-based curriculum, a phenomenon that has undermined effective curriculum implementation and attainment of the global goal on education. It is important to mention that an evaluation of the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework career pathways in selected public secondary schools in Lusaka district may remain completely unattended to, not until a review of related literature on the prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways in secondary schools is provided in the subsequent subtheme.

## **2.4 Prevailing Conditions that affect the Implementation of the Curriculum Framework Career Pathways in Secondary Schools.**

Citizenry access to education begins with the strategic and comprehensive implementation of the curriculum by teachers at school level. Effective curriculum implementation requires the presence the well-trained human resource, availability of teaching and learning materials and availability of basic infrastructure that may support teaching and learning as mentioned by M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E (2013). Besides, Mkandawire (2010) stated that strategic financial policy in financing public education remain central in ensuring effective implementation of the curriculum at national level. Across the world, the purpose intent of curriculum change is anchored to provide equitable and sustainable human development for all (Kabombwe, 2019). For example, Maswabi (2017) mentioned that in most Sub-Saharan Africa, the rationale of curriculum reform remains centred on actualising change for strictly address education system demands.

World over, in many countries effective curriculum implementation is negatively affected by many factors in terms of scope and intensity (Solis, 2020). While effective curriculum implementation at any level of the education system may be described as resource-intensive, effective curriculum implementation has been constrained by various factors that have undoubtedly hampered adherence to national curriculum framework such as unavailability of educational infrastructure, human and financial resources (Mkandawire, 2010). In view of this the prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways are considered in the subsequent paragraphs.

In curriculum implementation, attitude towards work is identified as one of the weaknesses that affects learner achievement (Changwe & Mwanza, 2022). According to Muchira et al (2023) although a teacher may be qualified and competent, the laissez-faire attitude emanating from poor work culture may be a huge obstruction in effective curriculum implementation. Mandukwini (2016) noted that poor work culture which manifests inform of teacher absenteeism from class and lack of punctuality remains a complete destruction of quality education in most public schools in South Africa. This is because absenteeism undermines curriculum implementation by depriving learners of learning activities and curriculum content which should provide a clear academic basis for academic assessment at classroom level (Adu & Ngibe, 2014).

In curriculum theory and practice, one of the best practices of enhancing quality provision of education is to ensure that each and every school is provided with good and adequate infrastructure in terms of classrooms, libraries as well as well stocked laboratories as noted by Ajani (2023). When the infrastructure is good and adequate, all learners are likely to comfortably attend lessons and remain attentive during lessons due to the ideal learning environment created through the availability of furniture in a classroom set up (Rambuda, 2023). It is this type of learning environment that has the potential to enhance learner achievement irrespective of the pedagogical approaches employed in curriculum implementation as asserted by Molepo (2014). However, Mandukwini (2016) noted that most of the public schools in high density residential areas of South Africa endured the scarcity of basic fixtures and fittings in education utility rooms such as worktops and footrests.

Further, the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 was largely hampered by the shortage of infrastructure in public schools. Since time in memorial the principle of quality education has been that the quality of education is in a teacher. However, it is important to underscore that quality infrastructure, safe and clean learning environment are not only a necessity but an ideal environment for effective curriculum implementation as asserted by Thomas and Thomas (2009). In an educational institution, specialised learning spaces such as classrooms and laboratories are integral in the course of pursuing educational aims, goals and objectives. For example, conducting science-based assessments in Biology requires not only the availability of specimen and laboratory apparatus but indeed laboratory infrastructure for effective implementation of competency-based curriculum. However, in Zambia, most public upgraded or combined schools encountered challenges in conducting practical based assessment due to lack of utility and specialised learning facilities such as computer and science laboratories, Art rooms and industrial art workshops (Mpofu et al, 2021).

Conversely, the indifference in the national economic environment remains a challenge as stated by Groenewald and Mpisi (2022); Adu and Ngibe (2014). The implementation of the outcome-based curriculum is practically resource intensive that requires a clear fiscal strategy in line with a general overview of the economic performance of the country (Ajani, 2023). This is for the reason that curriculum theory and practice, assessment remain premised on the practical demonstration of knowledge, skills, values and attitude that require the usage of prescribed tools and resources which require a corresponding resource envelop to be procured. However, economic indifference remains a serious challenge on the smooth implementation of

the competency-based curriculum as the challenge has undermined all the consented effort integral to the effective implementation of the national curriculum in South African public secondary schools as noted by Mandukwini (2016).

Further, since 2006 from the adoption and adaptation of the competency-based curriculum in Namibia, teachers have for a long time remained with a task of trying to come to terms with an ideology of outcomes-based education, new learning areas, new content and the implications of calls for integration, contextualisation, relevance and learner-centeredness (Groenewald & Mpisi, 2022). This did not only require that teachers change how and what they teach and assess, but it also challenged their underlying social, economic and political belief systems. But then, like in many other developing countries, teacher education in South Africa has not equitably and accurately responded to the special occupational and technical demands of the out-come based curriculum (Taole, 2015).

Furthermore, in Nigeria, the other challenge encountered during curriculum implementation is poor pedagogical approaches by teachers. UNICEF (2000) mentioned that poor pedagogical approaches remain the main distractor in ensuring effective lesson delivery especially in public schools that have adopted the inclusive education policy in curriculum implementation. Quality pedagogical approaches remain central in curriculum implementation, challenges in the quality of teacher education which has a huge bearing on the lesson delivery as stated by Letshwene and Plessis (2021). However, teachers who could hardly adopt, assimilate and apply best practices in curriculum implementation experience challenges in conducting formative assessment during teaching and learning (Rambuda, 2023).

Similarly, lack of competencies among teachers presented a short coming that obstructed the effective implementation of the 2013 competency-based curriculum in selected public schools of Lusaka district (Ng'andu, 2022). While assessment remain integral to effective curriculum implementation, conducting assessment during teaching and learning requires the application of basic professional and academic skills from a qualified and competent teacher (M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E, 2013). However, the deficiency in professional and academic competences among teachers has remained a huge impediment in assessment during teaching and learning as noted by Luhanga (2019). For example, UNICEF (2000) mentioned that there is a huge disparity between the demands of the education at classroom level and teacher education. Henceforth the challenge in formative assessment lingers.

Moreover, the commencement of the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in 2014 brought about the introduction of computer studies as a compulsory education programme in both public and private school. However, Masumba (2019) explained that the implementation of computer studies in both public and private schools at junior level proved to be a challenge due to the unavailability of competent and qualified teachers, shortage of computer laboratory facilities, computers and little or limited access to electricity especially in rural and community schools. Thus, affecting the effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum in both public and private schools (Changwe and Mwanza, 2022).

In addition, effective curriculum implementation requires a complete access to teaching and learning materials as mentioned by Changwe and Mwanza (2022). This is because in the absence of a competent and qualified teacher a textbook fundamentally substitutes a teacher. In fact, quality textbooks do not only enhance knowledge, skills, values and attitudes but also the development of reading and studying culture as noted by Wong (2011). However, Musilekwa (2019) mentioned by the procurement of quality teaching and learning materials has remained a challenge in Zambian public schools that has hampered effective implementation of the curriculum. Besides, the failure to procure quality teaching and learning materials is largely attributed to poor financial policies on the education system which are mostly due to national economic meltdown as explained by Changwe and Mwanza (2022); Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019); Mkandawire (2010).

In curriculum implementation, limited teaching and learning time presents a challenge to effective curriculum implementation in public secondary schools in Zambia. According to Changwe and Mwanza (2022) the ever-growing human population in both urban and rural areas coupled with constrained budget allocation to the education sector has had a negative implication on the education infrastructure development. Due to limited growth in the education system, for a long time, most schools in urban areas resorted to double and triple class sessions in order to accommodate and compensate for the limited school places as mentioned by Mkandawire (2010). However, this practice has remained detrimental to effective curriculum implementation including the Zambian Education Curriculum Framework 2013 (Mpfungu et al, 2021). This is for the reason that teachers do not only get tired when conducting the double and triple sessions but teachers generally neglect assessment as it is viewed to be less important compared to teaching during curriculum implementation.

On a summative note, it is reasonable to suggest that broadly, the quality of education obtaining in most sub-Saharan African countries schools reflects the quality of teacher education and the quality of the teachers reflects the quality of teacher education, institutions which includes Colleges of Education, University Colleges and Universities which may either be public or private. It is imperative to note that the focus of concern in an effective teacher education should remain oriented towards the conceptualisation of prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways in secondary schools. In fact, various public educational policies ought to be kept under constant review to ensure that it responds to the real needs of public schools (MoE, 2023).

## **2.5 Secondary Schools Adhere to the Curriculum Framework Career Pathway Provisions and Guidelines in Curriculum Implementation.**

In education theory, the basic function of a public school is to transpose the most critical areas if not all areas of culture from one generation to the next as mentioned by Kelly (2004). According to Murray (2020) a curriculum ought to reflect at least the ideal culture of the people in a given society as a means of adapting and attending to the needs of society through education. However, Mkandawire (2010) noted that the majority of public schools in most developing countries remain crippled to effectively implement the curriculum. This is despite the fact that curriculum implementation remains the main co-business of public schools. However, it is worth mentioning that based on the review of related literature on competency-based curriculum implementation various Ministries of Education seem not to contain adequate scientific data on public secondary school adherence rate to the provisions of curriculum career pathway guidelines. Nevertheless, the scanty information which is short of statistical description on the adherence rate of secondary schools as may be obtaining in various countries is analysed in the paragraphs that follows.

For many years, in South Africa the public education curriculum has relatively remained alien to the majority of South Africans citizens who find the education system quite irrelevant to their immediate needs of their own communities (Adu & Ngibe, 2014). While the South African education system could have changed significantly since 1997, the performance of the education system drastically remained unsatisfactory to the realisation to social justice especially public schools in poor neighbourhoods, this is generally because, in most public schools financing constraints remained pervasive as asserted by Groenewald and Mpisi (2022). In competency-based curriculum implementation process, while individual teachers and school

policy could be projected towards a comprehensive implementation of the curriculum, limited financial support towards implementation negatively interferes with the effective curriculum implementation process (Mkandawire, 2010) ;(Changwe & Mwanza, 2022).

In addition, negative attitude towards evaluation has been a challenge encountered in the evaluation of education programmes in most developing countries across the globe. Negative attitude or fear of evaluation describes the lack of appreciation of the role of evaluation in the education system as underscored by Bound et al (2013). In most instances, the thought that the evaluation findings may turn out negative, generates the fear that such findings may lead to loss of employment among programme or project implementers. This distorted attitude of education evaluation programmes remain largely responsible for the general attitude of programme administrators who expects evaluation reports which only highlights positive aspects about their project or program as asserted by Kelly (2004). Thus, this trend may largely be responsible for the limitation on the research data on the extent to which public schools in many different countries adhere to the curriculum framework career path-way provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation.

In 2005, the anticipation from the Tanzanian government at the time of competency-based curriculum launch, was that the implementation of the new curriculum framework will spearhead massive economic growth through skills development across national level as noted by Komba and Mwandanji (2015). However, although the implementation of the competency-based curriculum was delayed in all primary schools due to human resource capacity challenges, infrastructure and financial policy challenges, the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in Tanzanian secondary schools has not been without unforeseen shortcomings as asserted Kimario and Otieno (2022). For example, Nkya et al (2021) noted that from the onset, the vocational career pathway was never received with high levels of academic euphoria.

Similarly, although Komba and Mwandanji (2015) asserted that inadequate provision of educational infrastructure in schools have the potential to undermine the efforts necessary in effective curriculum implementation, most of the research that has been conducted on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum does not provide any statistical description or inferences pertaining to the extent to which secondary schools in Tanzania adhere to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation. Perhaps, this information gap provides a clear justification for an evaluation

of curriculum implementation of career pathways in secondary schools in Lusaka district: A case of the 2013 competency-based curriculum framework.

In addition, a number of educational programmes that have been introduced have largely not been accompanied by capacity building packages on evaluation, the Ministry of Education (1996); Ministry of General Education (2017) projected the introduction of school-based assessment that would eventually substitute national assessment at both primary and secondary level. The general weakness in the implementation of the competency-based curriculum is that there seem to be a systemic policy failure in the *Zambian Education Curriculum Framework 2013* on the specific details on how each aspect of the career pathway either the vocational or academic was supposed to be implemented. Thus, rendering an evaluation of curriculum implementation of career path-ways in secondary schools in Lusaka district a necessary undertaking.

Similarly, policy deficiency in the implementation of the *Zambia education curriculum framework 2013* presents a systemic obstacle in the evaluation of the competency-based curriculum in Zambia. M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E (2013) mentioned that the successful implementation of all educational programmes requires a comprehensive and clear course of action that provides clear structural benchmarks. In the same vein, the evaluation of the competency-based curriculum requires maximum policy guidelines emanating from policy implementation. Nevertheless, it's quite clear that the *Zambian education system* is devoid of a policy framework benchmark on how and the extent to which the specific career path-ways should have been effectively implemented (Zulu, 2019). Instead, the implementation of either career-pathway remained a completely preserve of the school authorities (M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E, 2013).

In conclusion, even though the education system in most developing countries across the world continues to shifts from the colonial past within the context of global change. Many aspects within the curriculum development and implementation process, have remained unattended to as asserted by Paulo and Tilya (2014). This has been noted in the manner in which the competency-based curriculum has been structured and implemented over time. Nevertheless, world-over an evaluation of the competency-based curriculum, should remain a rigorous and continuous undertaking through deliberate and collaborative engagement with all concerned parties and citizens in order to demystify the misconception which suggest that there are no fundamental differences between the content and competency-based curriculum. In fact, while many countries may highly be dependent on the education sector to provide the required

development expertise in terms of human and mechanical resources. Linking education reforms to the national developmental demands by developing certain competencies without providing an amiable environment in which school leavers can develop and thrive is completely counterproductive (Komba & Mwandangi, 2015).

## **2.6 Summary.**

In this chapter, several sources of literature related to an evaluation of the implementation of the competency-based curriculum career path-ways has been reviewed. The review of related literature was conducted in terms of deliberation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation under the four broad subthemes obtaining in different jurisdiction across the world. In this chapter, a deliberation, analysis and evaluation of the literature provided a framework that demonstrated the research gap that provides a basis to conduct an evaluation of the implementation of the competency-based curriculum career pathways in secondary schools of Lusaka district. In addition, it is important to note that the subsequent chapter in this study is the methodology.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Overview**

This chapter focuses on the methodology that was employed in this study. The methodology of the study provides the general underpinning and guidelines relevant to the study. Thus, this chapter provides an overview of the methodology that was used in the study consisting of, the research paradigm, research design, target population, sampling techniques, sample size and research instruments. Further, quality control, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure and ethical considerations are explained. Finally, a summary is drawn at the end of the chapter.

### **3.2 Research Paradigms**

In research theory and practice, the word paradigm denotes a method, model or pattern for conducting research (Ronoh, 2017). In this study, the interpretivism paradigm was used. This is because the paradigm is primarily anchored on deeply understanding the subjective meaning and experiences of individuals within a social context (Mulenga, 2015).

### **3.3 Research Design**

According to Khanday and Khanan (2019) a research design is a structure outline which a researcher employs to generate responses to the specific research objectives. In this study, a case study research design was used. A case study is an in-depth, detailed investigation of a particular phenomenon within a real-world context (Creswell, 2009). In this research the case study design was presumed to provide an opportunity to the researcher to adopt and apply a variety of methods in order to acquire the complex reality under study. Besides, the purpose of the study was premised on obtaining concrete, contextual, in-depth knowledge on the curriculum implementation of career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district.

### **3.4 Target Population**

In research, a target population refers to a specific subset within a large cohort, delineated by predefined criteria that align with the research objectives (Willie, 2024). Nevertheless, the target population for this study was, all the grade twelve (12) learners, all subject teachers , all the guidance and counselling teachers , all the heads of departments and all Deputy Head

teachers of public secondary schools in Lusaka district. In fact, public schools were purposively considered for this study, because by design, public schools remain bound to implement all public policies on education and broadly reflects national intent on education. In addition, all the subject Senior Education Standard Officers (SESOs), Senior Education Officer Guidance and Counselling and Assistant Director Curriculum Development in Lusaka district were part of the target population.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques**

In a qualitative study, the word sampling technique refers to the process of selecting a specific number of individuals from a target population for a study (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). However, it is important to ensure that the common characteristics of the selected individuals remain the basis for consideration in order to ensure an inclusive and adequate representation of the target population (Mooya, 2021). At the same time, for the reason that this study was contextually qualitative, purposive sampling procedure was ideal to reach out to the participants.

#### **3.5.1 Schools**

At the time of this research, Lusaka district had 11 zones which consisted of 61 public secondary schools. In this case, the district had 35 government secondary schools, 19 combined schools, 5 grant-aided secondary schools and 2 grant-aided combined schools. For this study, six (6) public secondary schools were sampled using heterogeneous purposive sampling technique across the eleven (11) zones taking into account the demographic, structure and type of the public school.

#### **3.5.2 Learners**

In an effort to obtain the grade 12 learners' attitude towards the curriculum career pathways and factors that affected curriculum implementation (prevailing conditions) selecting the learners for participation in the study remained central. However, it is important to indicate that using maximum variation or (heterogeneous) sampling, a total number of eight (8) participants, for a focused group discussion was considered in every public school sampled for the study. Of these 8 (eight), an equitable number of learners from both the academic and vocational career pathways was selected on the basis of the average highest and lowest performance

recorded in the two (2) past consecutive end of term test in either notable academic or vocational subjects.

### **3.5.3 Subject Teachers.**

In an effort to obtain subject teachers' perspective on curriculum implementation at school level, a total number of (8) teachers were selected from each academic department using maximum variation sampling technique. It is important to note that the maximum differences considered for the selection of the subject teachers were in terms of gender, duration of service and subject specialisation.

### **3.5.4 Career Guidance and Counselling Teachers**

At school level, the third phase of the set of individuals that was sampled in the study was the career guidance and teacher. At this stage, expert purposive sampling was used to select the career guidance and counselling teacher in every public school sampled. Therefore, this provided the researcher with a maximum number of (6) six career guidance specialist teachers. It is worth emphasising that the career and guidance teachers were cardinal to this study, because of the role and occupational duties and responsibilities that are attached and associated with the guidance and career's office when it comes to issues of learner placement and career pathways in curriculum implementation.

### **3.5.5 Heads of Department (HoDs)**

At school level, the third phase of the cohort of individuals that were sampled in the study were the HoDs. At this stage, (2) two HoDs from both the academic and vocational departments were selected in every public school sampled, using the maximum variation or (heterogeneous) purposive sampling technique. Therefore, this provided a maximum numeric value of (12) twelve HoDs. Nevertheless, while it is clearly understood and established that each HoD could have possessed and provided peculiar experience to this study when it came to issues of career pathway implementation, the maximum variation sampling technique was intended to provide maximum mitigation measures in selection bias.

### **3.5.6 Deputy Head teachers**

At the fourth stage of the sampling phase, the deputy head teacher of the sampled public schools that provide secondary education was selected for the study. The deputy head teachers were selected using expert purposive sampling technique. Thus, the compound numeric value of the deputy head teachers in the study was (6) six. This is largely because deputy head teachers remained not only the immediate supervisors of the HoDs and career guidance teachers, but equally occupy the central role in the implementation of various career pathways and the general implementation of the curriculum.

### **3.5.7 Senior Education Officer Guidance and Counselling and Senior Education Standards Officers.**

At provincial level, one (1) Senior Education Officer Guidance and Counselling and seven (7) Senior Education Standards Officers (SESOs) were selected using expert purposive sampling procedure. Expert purposive sampling procedure was considered essential for the reason that the (SEO Guidance) remain in charge of the career guidance and counselling office across all secondary schools. Besides, (SESOs) remain the ultimate experts in academics, whose main preoccupation boards on education standards and curriculum implementation outside school (Public Service Management Division, 2018).

### **3.5.8 Assistant Director Curriculum Development**

At national level, the Assistant Director at the Directorate of Curriculum Development was selected using expert purposive sampling procedure. This is because all matters pertaining to curriculum development, implementation and evaluation begins and ends with the Directorate of Curriculum Development in the Ministry of Education.

## **3.6 Sample Size**

The term sample size refers to the number of participants or observations included in a study (Kaur, 2017). In this study the estimated sample size was 129. In this case the sample comprised of (48) forty-eight Learners, (48) forty-eight Subject Teachers, (6) six Career and Guidance Teachers, (12) twelve Heads of Department and (6) six Deputy Head teachers from 6 public schools which offer secondary education. In addition, (1) one SEO Guidance and Counselling and seven (7) SESOs which includes the SESO Social Sciences, Mathematics, Languages,

Practical Subjects, Business Studies, Expressive Arts and Natural Sciences. Besides, the Assistant Director Curriculum Development was part of the sample. Nevertheless it is important to indicate that a sample of 129 participants was intended to get the clear perspective from the key stakeholders at all levels of the education system.

### **3.7 Research Instruments**

Research instruments are means that are used in the collection of data in any given study in line with the research objectives (Sharma, 2022). In this study interview schedules, focused group discussion guide and document analysis guide were the means of data collection. The diversity in employing three (3) different types of instruments was purposively intended to promote triangulation in data collection which eventually enhanced maximum data control management as noted by Oben (2021). It is important to indicate that the two research tools namely focused group discussion guide and the interview schedules were used in the collection of data. Focused group discussion guide was used to collect data from subject teachers and learners at school level and the interview schedules were used in the collection of data from the career guidance and counselling teachers, the Heads of Department, Deputy Head teachers, the SEO Guidance and Counselling, SESOs and Assistant Director Curriculum Development. In addition, document analysis guide was used in collecting data at school level. In this case, comparing the nature and number of subjects in a given classroom in every school with the nature and number of subjects of a career sub-type in a given career pathway as provided for in the curriculum framework.

#### **3.7.1 Focus Group Discussion Guide for Learners**

A focused group discussion is a qualitative research method and data collection mechanism in which a selected group of people discuss a given topic or issue in-depth under established guidelines and moderation (Shiblatani, 2024). In this study, a focus group discussion guide was used to collect information from learners that bordered on the attitude of learners on the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways and prevailing conditions that could have affected the implementation of the curriculum career pathway in various secondary schools. Nonetheless it is imperative to indicate that the focused group was comprised of a total number of eight (8) participants.

### **3.7.2. Focus Group Discussion for Subject Teachers.**

At school level, an engagement with different subject teachers across all departments was fundamentally envisioned to obtain data on the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways, establish the attitude on the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways, ascertain the prevailing conditions that could have affected the implementation of the curriculum framework and school adherence to the curriculum framework career pathways guidelines and provisions. Thus, a focused group discussion was conducted through the usage of a focused group discussion guide.

### **3.7.3 Interview Guide for Career Guidance Teachers**

At school level, an engagement with the career guidance and counselling teacher was basically intended to obtain data on the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways, attitude on the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways, ascertain the prevailing conditions that could have affected the implementation of the curriculum framework and school adherence to the curriculum framework career pathways guidelines and provisions. Consequently, interviews were conducted through the usage of the semi-structured interview schedule.

### **3.7.4 Interview Guide for HoDs**

At school level, two (2) separate interaction with two different heads of department from both the academic and vocational departments through the usage of semi-structured interview schedules was basically intended to provide data on the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways, attitude on the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways, ascertain the prevailing conditions that could have affected the implementation of the curriculum framework and school adherence to the curriculum framework career pathways guidelines and provisions.

### **3.7.5 Interview Guide for Deputy Head teachers**

In an effort to evaluate the curriculum implementation of career pathways in secondary schools of Lusaka district, a strategic interaction with Deputy Head teachers at school level remained central to the study. The interaction was intended to provide data on the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways, attitude on the school provision of the curriculum

framework career pathways, ascertain the prevailing conditions that could have affected the implementation of the curriculum framework and school adherence to the curriculum framework career pathway guidelines and provisions. Consequently, interviews were conducted through the usage of semi-structured interview schedules.

### **3.7.6 Interview Guide for SEO Guidance and Counselling and SESOs.**

Further, at provincial level an official conversation with the SEO Guidance and Counselling and seven (7) subject SESOs remained essential. Therefore, an engagement with these officials was anticipated to provide data on conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways, attitude towards school provisions of the curriculum framework career pathways, prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways and whether secondary schools in Lusaka district adhered to the curriculum framework career pathways provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation. Nevertheless, with the aid of semi-structured interview schedule, data was collected.

### **3.7.7 Interview Guide for Assistant Director Curriculum Development**

At national level, an engagement with the Assistant Director in the Directorate of Curriculum Development remained paramount to the study, this is because, as earlier mentioned, curriculum development, implementation and evaluation begins and ends with the Directorate Standards and Curriculum. Thus, with the aid of a semi-structured interview schedule, the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways, attitude towards school provisions of the curriculum framework career pathways, prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways and whether secondary schools in Lusaka district adhered to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation was anticipated to be established by the researcher.

### **3.7.9 Document Analysis Guide**

Document analysis refers to the act of reviewing text or graphical documents that may be electronic or printed as asserted by Bowen (2009). Generally, document analysis encompasses the scrutiny and interpretation of the information provided for in the document under consideration. In this research document analysis was used in analysing the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 and school curriculum frameworks from the six (6) schools

sampled. Document analysis is distinct from other types of sources of primary information in social science research. This is because document analysis is affixed on the basic review of texts information, illustrations or graphics (Luhanga, 2019).

### **3.8 Quality Control**

Quality control is a cardinal aspect that should be considered in promoting trustworthiness of research findings (Chowdhury, 2015). In this study in order to ensure trustworthiness the researcher ensured strategic adherence to the specific provision essential in quality control during the study which includes but not limited to; credibility, dependability, conformability and authenticity as noted by Patton (1990).

#### **3.8.1 Credibility**

Credibility refers to the maximum level of confidence that is placed in the truth of the research findings (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). In this study, credibility was promoted through the usage of distinct data collection methods. In fact, the usage of distinct method during the data collection process brought about the aspect of triangulation. The word triangulation describes the systematic and deliberate practices in which the researcher grounds his or her data collection procedure in a wide range of relevant research instruments and procedures (Chowdhury, 2015).

#### **3.8.2 Dependability**

In qualitative research, the word dependability refers to the steadiness of research data over a given period of time (Newby, 2010). Dependability is about the researcher evaluating the research data, analysis and synthesis of the study. In this study, dependability was adhered to through ensuring that the data that was collected was ultimately a reflection of the perspective of the participants (Creswell & Plano, 2007).

#### **3.8.3 Confirmability**

The term confirmability is used to signify the gradation of the research findings that are primarily supported by both the existing primary and secondary literature as noted by Chowdhury (2015). In this study, the findings primarily reflect the views of the actual respondents outlined in line with what has been provided for within this chapter. Therefore, in

view of this as a measure to ensure clear adherence to the principles of confirmability, member checking, recording of interviews, accuracy and impartiality among all respondents in data presentation was ensured.

### **3.8.4 Authenticity**

In all qualitative studies, authenticity remain an integral component of quality control management approach. In qualitative research, the word authenticity is used to denote the conduct of research and evaluation through real and meaningful practices that ensures an augmented contribution in theory and practice of a discipline or field of study (Stahl & King, 2020). In this study authenticity was observed through comprehensive documentation of all the necessary steps observed throughout the study as a measure to enhance and guarantee transparency and credibility which would allow other researchers analyse the findings of this study by following the same procedures and understanding.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedure**

In qualitative research, establishing clear limitations on the scope and collection of data remains integral to the data collection process as asserted by Creswell and Plano (2007). A description of the data collection procedure includes; how the data was gathered, how access to research sites and to the target population was obtained. Thus, to get started, engagement with the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies paved way to obtain ethical clearance. In addition, engagement with the, Assistant Dean Post Graduate, School of Education at the University of Zambia was to obtain an introductory letter that served as part of proof and legitimacy of identity during data collection. Nevertheless, it is imperative to indicate that a prior self-introduction and presentation of all relevant documents of identity, such as valid University of Zambia identity card, national registration card and an introductory letter were adduced at self-introduction stage during the data collection process.

Furthermore, interface with the Provincial Education Office for authorisation to conduct interviews with the Senior Education Officer Guidance and Counselling and Senior Education Standard Officers through appointments was sought. Subsequently, at district level engagement with the District Education Board Secretary was paramount in order to obtain permission to engage with various head teachers of public schools that provide secondary education.

In commencing the research expedition at school level, through the office of the head teacher appointments were sought in order to conduct interviews with the careers and guidance teachers, the heads of departments and the deputy head teacher as well as conducting a focused group discussion with various subject teachers from different department and grade (12) twelve learners from different career pathways. Further, interviews with the career's guidance and counselling teacher, different heads of department and deputy head teachers were conducted on one-on-one basis in obtaining their conceptualisation, learner, teacher and educational personnel's attitude, prevailing conditions associated with the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 and school adherence to the curriculum career pathways provision and guidelines.

Similarly, at provincial level through the office of the provincial education officer, the researcher sought to conduct one on one interviews with the Senior Education Officer Guidance and Counselling and all the subject Senior Education Standard Officers who will be selected purposively. The interviews with the SEO Guidance and Counselling and SESOs were projected to provide insight into the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework, attitude towards the school provision of the curriculum career pathway, prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathway and extent to which public schools that provide secondary education in Lusaka district adhered to the provisions and guidelines that underpins the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013.

Conversely, engagement with the office of the Permanent Secretary Administration, was necessary for clear purposes of obtaining permission and an appointment prior to the engagement with Directorate Curriculum Development. Thus, engagement with the Assistant Director Curriculum Development on the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways and the prevailing conditions that affected the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways remained eminent.

Moreover, using document analysis guide, the researcher obtained perspectives from the following public documents which include the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (2013), Zambia Education Curriculum Framework evaluation report (2013) and various school curriculum frameworks from the six (6) schools sampled.

### **3.10. Data Analysis Procedure**

In qualitative research data analysis refers to the systematic process of amalgamation of the specific details of the research findings, through critical examination and description of the data which would result into subsequent comparisons, modelling and transformation with the goal of establishing the relationship between and across specific elements and variables (Islam, 2020). However, in this study, data analysis was primarily intended to provide general descriptions of the insight through deductive-inductive reasoning. Nevertheless, according to Mooya (2021), in a qualitative study, data analysis is a constituency of data reduction, data display and inference.

In addition, it is important to indicate that in qualitative research there is no single approach that is universally applicable for data analysis. Instead, principally what is central in data analysis is the nature and scope of the objectives of the study as asserted by Stahl and King (2020). Meanwhile, the projection was that from the onset, the researcher familiarised with the research data of this study. Further, common patterns in the data were identified which subsequently facilitated the generation of common themes that strategically provided specific classes of data were the researcher certainly established comparisons, modelling and interpretation of data. In addition, through the usage of thematic analysis data was organised, accounted for and described according to the general participants' conceptualisation, attitude, perspectives and experience in an effort to provide a logical description and logical conclusion of the study. Besides, the data that was analysed was comparatively interpreted in line with the objectives, theoretical framework and the conceptual framework adopted for this study.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

In academic research the word ethics is used to describe a collection of principles that serve as guidelines to the researcher before, during and after data collection (Mirza, Bellalem, & Mirza, 2023). Ethical concerns applicable in educational research remain largely complex. However, the failure to recognise the ethical concerns could have had the potential to undermine the integrity necessary to this academic research (Cohen et al, 2000).

Ethics provided an assurance to both the researcher and participants that undoubtedly guaranteed both short-term and long-term security. In fact, according to Mulenga (2015), an expression of discomfort, anxiety, stress, guilt or misgivings by any respondents during data

collection has the potential to completely undermine the integrity and trust necessary for quality control during the study. Nevertheless, in this study basic adherence to the standard practice of academic research that ensured maximum observation of the code of ethics provided for by the University of Zambia Research Committee, remained integral. Thus, during the study the researcher was bound to uphold all the necessary consideration that safeguarded the dignity and integrity of the sampled respondents by means of the following;

### **3.11.1 Reciprocity**

Reciprocity refers to the general tendency of empathy, exercised or felt by either or a part in a given situation of a relationship, in which either both or a part in that relationship would want to show or demonstrate maximum level of appreciation as a result of a derived benefit from the existing relationship (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). The voluntary participation of the sampled individuals into the research could in some ways have been viewed as an honour in which to a certain extent, the researcher could have felt indebted and obligated to give back or appreciate the role played by the participants in answering to the question that corresponds with the research objectives. However, in this study the researcher did not make any form of concession that bordered on material or monetary benefits, or perhaps any other intangible benefits that could have been derived through personal or emotional sacrifice in anyway.

### **3.11.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity**

In research, the word confidentiality is used to mean a regard for maximum preservation on access and disclosure, including means for protecting personal privacy and proprietary information (Arifin, 2018). Meanwhile, the term anonymity implies the incident of detaching personal information that identifies the respondents sampled for a study as stated by Fleming and Zegwaard (2018). Thus, in this study, the protection of respondents was guaranteed through a clear mechanism of anonymity in both data presentation and analysis. Besides, the researcher was able to ensure that the institutions where the respondents were sampled from were never mentioned or easily identified in any way. Nevertheless, it is imperative to indicate that to a certain extent the researcher found it rather difficult to clearly delink some respondents from anonymity and confidentiality largely because of the strategic location and the institution they occupy as indicated by Mulenga (2015).

### **3.11.3 Informed Consent**

In any research undertaking, adherence to ethical guidelines does not only remain integral in creating an ideal environment for the respondents but even so remain essential in safeguarding the integrity of the research data and the safety of the respondents as indicated by Mirza et al (2023). Thus, the need to provide adequate information on the implication and usage of the research data provided by the respondents remained key in the data collection procedure, in this regard the researcher sought to engage the respondents by ensuring that they consider their participation in the study and that their participation was anchored on informed consent through appending a signature on a letter of consent as a matter of confirmation of participation in the study.

### **3.12 Summary**

In this chapter, details on the methodology which were employed in this study have been explained, which includes research paradigm, research design, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, research instruments, quality control, data collection procedure, data analysis as well as the ethical considerations.

## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

### 4.1 Overview

In the previous chapter, the researcher described in detail the qualitative methodology which was used to conduct this study. In this chapter, while a demographic description of the sample from which the data was obtained has been provided, the research findings have equally been presented. In order to explore the extent to which secondary schools effectively implemented the 2013 curriculum framework in line with the provisions and guidelines of the curriculum framework Career Pathways the following research questions guided this study.

- i. How did teachers and other educational personnel conceptualise the curriculum framework career path-ways in secondary schools in Lusaka district?
- ii. What was the attitude of teachers and learners towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career path-ways in secondary schools in Lusaka district?
- iii. What were the prevailing conditions that affected the implementation of the curriculum framework career path-ways in secondary schools in Lusaka district?
- iv. To what extent did secondary schools in Lusaka district adhere to the curriculum framework career path-way provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation?

### 4.2 Demographic details of participants

In this section, the demographic details of participants are presented. A total number of 129 participants were interviewed as summarised in Table 4.1.

*Table 4.1: Frequency and percentage distribution of participants*

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b><i>f</i></b>	<b>%</b>
<b><u>Gender</u></b>		
Male	60	46.5
Female	69	53.5
<b><u>Type of participant</u></b>		
Grade Twelve Learners	48	37.2
Subject Teachers	48	37.2
Career Guidance Teachers	6	4.7
Heads of Department Social Sciences	12	9.3
Deputy Head Teachers	6	4.7
SESO Social Sciences	8	6.2
Assistant Director	1	0.8

Table 4.1 shows that most of the participants were female making up 53.5% and males making up 46.5%. with a representation of 37.2% Grade Twelve Learners, 37.2% Subject Teachers,

4.7% Career Guidance Teachers, 9.3% Heads of Departments, 4.7% Deputy Head Teachers, 6.2% SESOs and 0.8% Assistant Director.

### **4.3 Findings of the Study**

In an effort to achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher used a case study qualitative research design as explained in chapter three. Most importantly, it should be noted here that the interview schedules had comparable questions in line with the research objectives. In the actual reflection of the responses from the participants, the precise words have been used as much as possible, except in instances where necessary. Nevertheless, some responses have been rephrased for the sole purpose of maintaining the meaning and clarity in the responses. Therefore, the researcher drew themes from the research data collected and analysed.

### **4.4 Teachers and other Education Personnel's Conceptualisation of the Curriculum**

#### **Framework Career Pathways in Secondary Schools.**

Research question one was anticipated to get information from the Subject Teachers, Career Guidance Teachers, Heads of Department, Deputy Head teachers, Senior Education Standard Officers and Assistant Director, in order to establish a clear school of thought on the conceptualisation of the ZECF 2013.

#### **4.4.1 Conceptualisation of the Curriculum**

In an attempt to draw the perspective of the respondents about their conceptualisation of the curriculum they were asked to describe the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013. The general response from the majority of respondents was that the aims, goals and objectives were well intended. For example; a Guidance Teacher from school A mentioned that;

*The aims, goals and objectives were well intended.*

The Deputy Headteacher from school B also indicated that:

*The curriculum was well intended. Thus, its aims, goals and objectives have been achieved.*

HoD Design and Technology from School E mentioned that;

*As far as Design and Technology is concerned, the subject is tailored to provide hands on activities and promote self-reliance.*

Teacher 4 from school C stated that;

*The aims, goals and objective were on point. They were set to promote self-reliance of learners as they graduate from secondary school.*

On the other hand, some respondents described the aims, goals and objectives of the curriculum as not attainable for the reason that most schools were not properly oriented and supplied with adequate teaching and learning materials. For example; Teacher 1 from School A mentioned that;

*The aims, goals and objectives were disorganised as they did not account for the geographical, regional, social, economic and cultural diversity of Zambian citizens.*

HoD Business Studies from School D noted that;

*The aims, goals and objectives were impossible to achieve. This is because this school, like many other schools were not supported with adequate teaching and learning facilities...*

HoD Mathematics from School B indicated that:

*As a department our role is to build a learner who should become a problem solver. However, it is important to note that nothing much has changed in terms of the scope of the mathematics subject whether under content based or competency based.*

Teacher 3 from School E stated that;

*they were not attainable as the implementation has remained oriented towards the theoretical aspect of the curriculum.*

#### **4.4.2 Curriculum Career Path-Way Localisation and Adaptation**

Further, establishing a school of thought on the aspect of curriculum localisation and adaptation, participants were asked for their experience and views regarding the aspect of curriculum career pathway localisation and adaptation in schools. The majority of the

Participants described curriculum localisation and adaptation as the best practice that would ensure the realisation of various socio-economic advantages. For example; the Deputy Headteacher from School B stated that,

*It is a good move; however, it has the potential to undermine nationalism and national development because of the country's diversity in social, cultural and economic potential.*

Guidance Teacher from School D mentioned that;

*Curriculum localisation and adaptation is a good idea as a measure to respond to the environmental needs, but the challenge is availability of qualified human resource in teaching certain subjects that could fall under the localised curriculum.*

Additionally, the Deputy Headteacher from School F indicated that;

*I feel that a good curriculum should not only respond to the local needs of a citizen but to both national and global needs of the citizen, this is because we live in a global village.*

The views of the Deputy Headteacher from School F were echoed by SESO 3 who explained that;

*I am for the idea that “local is laka” but then we need to be strategic on how localisation is done because the education system ought to respond to both local and international needs of people.*

SESO 2 mentioned that;

*It was not well handled by various schools, but localisation and adaptation should be the ideal situation when it comes to curriculum implementation.*

On the other hand, Teacher 7 from School C indicated that;

*For me, localisation is the best thing to do, imagine if this school just implement the Business career path-way, those in Namwala just implement Agricultural*

*Science and those on the Copperbelt just implement subject related to mining... this would be the best because it would assist learners to exploit the environmental potentials.*

Similarly, the views of Teacher 7 from School C were amplified by Teacher 5 from School A who mentioned that;

*It is a good thing, but I am of the view that the best thing to do in terms of curriculum localisation is to establish secondary schools as fully specialised schools in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in curriculum implementation.*

In addition, in a probe question it was asked if they were some socio-economic opportunities or advantages provided to learners by the 2013 curriculum framework. Most of the participants acknowledged that there were socio-economic opportunities associated with the 2013 curriculum framework. However, it is important to indicate that a good number of participants only viewed socio-economic opportunities provided by the curriculum from the perspective of the vocational subjects. For example;

The Deputy Head teacher from school B stated that;

*The curriculum provides opportunities in the sense that learners acquire practical skills such as carpentry which may be used to the economic livelihood of learners after they complete their grade 12 (Twelve).*

HoD Home Economics from School D mentioned that;

*The opportunities and advantages could be there but there is a problem, our learners are not able to acquire the desirable skills because of the challenge of resources... this government has said don't ask learners to pay anything but then the school itself is failing to provide adequate financial support that would ensure that the department procure adequate teaching and learning materials in order to teach skills to our learners...*

Teacher 2 from School B explained that;

*Yes, the opportunities are there, especially for my subject computer studies, it provides business opportunities to learners after completing their grade 12, actually I have seen some of our former pupils running internet cafe business.*

Teachers 1 from School C mentioned that;

*Despite the implementation being very theoretical there are some business opportunities that are available to school leavers who have undergone this curriculum.*

On the other hand, some participants mentioned that the 2013 curriculum framework did not directly provide any socio-economic opportunities to school leavers. For example;

Teacher 1 from School A stated that;

*Opportunities are limited if not none of that exist. Instead, school learners have to identify and find for themselves based on their passion and experience. But none of these are connected to the education system as for now...*

Teacher 4 from school D indicated that;

*No opportunities because the subject remains too bookish, teachers have just concentrated on finishing the syllabus without looking at the interest of learners.*

Teacher 6 from School A mentioned that;

*There are no serious advantages or opportunities because the implementation of the vocational career path-way has been a failure due to limited resources.*

SESO 4 indicated that,

*Poor approaches to curriculum implementation have led to the failure to attain the socio-economic advantages and opportunities in any considerable manner as expected.*

## **4.5 Summary of the findings on conceptualisation of the Curriculum Framework**

### **Career Path-ways**

In an effort to establish clear teacher conceptualisation of the teacher's and other education personnel, the general responses clearly demonstrate that the majority of the subject teachers and all the education personnel involved in the study understood the intent of the Zambia education curriculum framework of 2013. However, the responses demonstrate, serious shortcomings that seemingly undermined the implementation of the curriculum framework at school level. For example, the issue of curriculum localisation and adaptation could have not been clearly and comprehensively outlined in the framework. In order to get more details from participant's attitude towards the curriculum framework was sought and the findings are provided in the next section.

## **4.6 Attitude of, Learners, Teachers and other Educational Personnel towards the School provision of the Curriculum Framework Career Path-Ways in Secondary Schools**

Research question two was assumed to obtain data from the Learners, Subject Teachers, Career Guidance Teachers, Heads of Department, Deputy Headteachers, Senior Education Standard Officers and the Assistant Director, in order to establish a clear school of thought on their actions, feelings and thought of the ZECF 2013.

### **4.6.1 Curriculum Career Path-Way**

In an attempt to establish clear viewpoints of participants about curriculum career pathways they were asked about their views regarding the nature of the subject combinations in various curriculum career pathways. The general response to this question from the majority of the respondents showed a dichotomy of perspectives. For example, the Guidance Teacher from School E mentioned that;

*The subject combination is okay. we implement the curriculum according to the government policy because we are a public school.*

Guidance Teacher from School D mentioned that;

*The subject combination is just okay, but we encounter a problem where we receive a learner on a transfer with a subject combination that varies.*

The view of the Guidance Teacher from school D was in some way reemphasised by Teacher 3 from school A who indicated that;

*Part of the problem with the curriculum career path-ways is that they have disadvantaged a learner on career path-way continuity and progression, especially in instances of a learner transfer. I would have liked a situation where some schools across the country implement a similar subject combination so that even when a learner comes from another district, they should be able to find a similar subject combination.*

HoD Expressive Arts from School A mentioned that;

*There has not been the interrelationship or linkage between and across subjects for example, learners who take Physical Education have not only demonstrated disinterest in physics and chemistry, but also wondered why they take Science related subjects because they insist that physics and chemistry does not complement their career prospects in sports.*

Similarly, on the issue of subject combination as highlighted by HoD expressive Arts from School A, SESO 4 and Pupil 7 from School C echoed similar concerns respectively, who explained that;

*Under the 2013 curriculum framework subjects such as geometric mechanical drawing, woodwork, power electric, material science, plastering and bricklaying were merged as one subject called Design and Technology. But then, this one subject called Design and Technology has been classified under a career path-way called technology, even when the rest of the subject in this career path-way do not relate to Design and Technology. The principle is that for an individual to be fully immersed and conceptualise a given career path-way a good number of the individual subjects in a particular career path-way need to be complementally and directly interrelated. But then this is not the case with all the career path-ways under the 2013 curriculum framework.*

*I feel my subject combination is poor. I want to become an engineer, am doing Design and Technology and History. In design and technology, I learn about*

*electricity which relates to physics, but am equally doing history. Imagine after reading about electricity I go and read about Mussolini. I feel like subject's combination should be related.*

In addition, SESO 2 stated that;

*My suggestion would be that six to seven subjects should be ideal for a vocational and academic career path way, respectively. Otherwise, having eight, nine or ten subjects is completely unnecessary as it undermines the basic effort required for returning learners' talent, interest and competencies.*

Similarly, the submission of the SESO 2 was equally highlighted by pupil 1 from School C and Pupil 7 from School B respectively who indicated that;

*The subjects we are taking are just too many 8 subjects is completely unnecessary, what the government needs to consider is learners' academic interest.*

*Our subject combination is very bulky, in our class we take 8 subjects and we find it hard to concentrate.*

Furthermore, participants were asked about their views and experience regarding the compulsory implementation of the vocational career pathway as career pathways in all schools as way of further establishing their clear understanding of curriculum career pathway perspectives. The general response to this question demonstrated that the majority of the participants were for the idea that at least a vocational subject should be compulsory to all learners in Zambian public schools in order to promote entrepreneurship, self-reliance and job creation among citizens. For example, the Assistant Director Curriculum Development mentioned that;

*It is a good thing because the government has a duty and responsibility to promote job creation by giving opportunities to Zambian citizens to acquire practicals skills, instead of over dependent on the government.*

On the contrary, a select few of the participants mentioned that making any vocational subject compulsory may be a complete disservice to both the learners and the Zambian education

system, for the reasons that include but not limited to the following as Teacher 1 from school A explained that;

*To develop this country, we do not need every citizen to have skills...we need citizens who are critical thinkers. In fact, this country needs thinkers. Otherwise, a skill without critical thinking is worthless.*

The Deputy Headteacher from School F mentioned that;

*compulsory, no, excellent performance in a subject does not mean interest on the part of the learner, it could mean effort to pass the subject, compulsory may not be a good idea because of learner varying interests.*

The Deputy Headteacher from school D stated that;

*...implementing a vocational career pathway costs money, where would the government get the money to finance the effective implementation of such an undertaking.*

Similarly, the views of the Deputy Headteacher from school D were echoed by the Guidance Teacher from School B who mentioned that;

*This will be a bit tricky partly because vocational subjects are resource intensive and not everyone will be interested in doing practical subjects. Again, it would not somehow be reasonable to have everyone in the country with practical skills instead, what is important is the consideration of learner's interest and ability.*

In addition, participants were asked to describe learner's attitudes towards some subjects in the career pathways. This question was asked so as to understand matters related to curriculum career pathway placement as outlined in the ZECF 2013. The general response was that learners had a negative attitude towards practical subjects and subjects that were perceived to be bulky. For example; Teacher 7 from School F stated that;

*Most of the learners who take Music and Art and Design at this school have demonstrated maximum dislike and disinterest.*

HoD Mathematics from School C also mentioned that;

*It is a mixed bag. Learners who take pure sciences and additional mathematics feel superior to learners who take other subjects. Meanwhile, those who take the vocational subjects feel inferior to those who take pure sciences and additional mathematics.*

Teacher 6 from school E indicated that;

*I have observed that most learners don't like subjects that are perceived as bulky, these subjects include History, Geography and Literature in English, it is in these subjects that we usually record high dropout and high incidence of absenteeism during the final examination for over the years.*

Correspondingly, the views of Teacher 6 from School E were also mentioned by Teacher 3 from School F who stated that;

*Learners' attitude toward the History subject is deeply regrettable. The subject has the highest dropout rate and highest level of absenteeism during examinations.*

Guidance Teacher from School E mentioned that;

*Most boys have developed negative attitudes toward food and nutrition because of being mocked that it's a subject for girls.*

In the same way, the observation expressed by Guidance Teacher from School E were equally submitted by Teacher 3 from school D who mentioned that;

*The attitude of learners seems to be more prominent in terms of gender stereotype especially for subjects like Food and Nutrition. Male learners who come from home where domestic activities are viewed in terms of gender differences usually resist the subject and say that it is meant for girls.*

#### **4.6.2 Career Guidance**

In order to obtain a clear perspective on learner placement with regards to the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework, participants were asked about their views regarding the

learner placement approach to curriculum career pathways that were done at school level. The common response from the most of the participants was that learners were to be placed according to their needs and not to balance up the numbers in classes. In fact, the responses seem to suggest that the majority of the educational practitioners were not satisfied with the prevailing practices on learner placement. For example; HoD Mathematics from School C mentioned that;

*I can say that it has not been done properly, I would therefore suggest that there is need for sensitisation and understanding learners' inborn skills and hobbies*

Teacher 1 from School A also indicated that;

*For this one I have a problem with the way it is done at this school, normally we just look at the results of the learner as a basis for learner placement without asking the learner about their interest and also looking at their capabilities.*

SESO 4 indicated that;

*Learner placement in most schools focuses more on learner's previous performance and not interest, part of the problem is that as a country we seem to lack a clear tracking policy of learners from primary schools to secondary.*

On the other hand, HoD design and technology from school E explained that;

*the aspect of undue and excess interference from guardians and parents has in some way affected learner placement at school level. For instance, in this school, learner placement has been a challenge as it has been met with a serious bar clash from the parents. For example, parents have resisted their children from taking local languages such as Chinyanja. Instead, most parents prefer their children taking language subjects such as French.*

Similarly, the concerns of HoD Design and Technology from School C were shared by the Deputy Headteacher for School F and HoD Natural Sciences from School F respectively who indicated that;

*The school approach to learner placement focuses more on learner interest and learner performance at grade 9 but we have a challenge that usually comes*

*from parents or guardians whose wish of the subject choice differs with that of the learner*

*There are different approaches used in learner placement but the challenge has been the situation where a parent dictates what their children should do, where the interest of the learner is different.*

Alternatively, Guidance Teacher School F mentioned that;

*At this school, during the first selection we engage the learner together with the guardian to choose the career pathway of their choice with our advice based on the preceding final examination results, in the second selection we place learners in various curriculum career pathways or classes as a measure of meeting government demands of ensuring education for all and this is done according to the available space and we overlook learner's interest in subject combination.*

Further, in order to confirm the learner placement approach at the time of enrolment, grade (twelve) 12 learners were asked to indicate how they were placed in the different career pathways that they were in. Most of the participants indicated that they were placed in the career pathway based on the grade (nine) 9 final examination results. For example; Pupil 2 from School E mentioned that;

*I was put in that class based on my performance at grade 9 and the career guidance teacher did not seek for my opinion.*

Pupil 4 from School B mentioned that;

*For me, who did my grade 8 and 9 at this school, when i came back to grade 10, I really wanted to do Additional Mathematics but because of my extremely good performance in Design and Technology at grade 9, I was forced to do Design and Technology.*

Similarly, the experience of Pupil 4 from School B was shared by Pupil 7 from School C who explained that;

*My passion was to do pure sciences but then I was put in a class for Design and Technology, because I did very well in the Subject and I found that the class for pure sciences was full. But I don't like the subject.*

In addition, participants were asked to describe the role that the career guidance office played in the implementation of the curriculum career pathways based on their experience. This was meant to provide a clear picture in relation to the learner placement approach. The prevailing response was that the career guidance office facilitated learner placement through advisory, guidance and counselling. For example; Guidance teacher from School E, mentioned that;

*Our concentration has remained advisory to both the learners and the parents and most importantly placement of learners according to their performance which includes performance at grade 9(nine) and also grade 10(ten) term one.*

The Deputy Headteacher from School A also mentioned that;

*The office is key in selection, orientation, placement and guidance to learners on various curriculum career pathways.*

HoD Design and Technology from School B indicated that;

*The office plays a central role in career guidance which is conducted in consultation with parents and learners on career path-ways.*

On the contrary, it is also imperative to indicate that, some participants provided, distinct responses on the role of the career guidance office in the implementation of the curriculum career path-ways. For example;

Teacher 1 from School C indicated that,

*Good question... "guidance office" ... is a "dead office". We only see them proactive during final examinations... the presence of the office is not felt by both teachers and learners... we see them providing identity cards to learners in grade 12(twelve) and sticking examination numbers on desks.*

In the same way, the submission by Teacher 1 from School C, was equally established by the HoD Home Economics from School F who explained that;

*I haven't seen them doing much, what I have seen them do is to focus on the development of learner's identity cards, running around with examination papers and management of examinations.*

Teacher 6 from School E mentioned that;

*I feel that overtime there has been some kind of a shift on the focus of the career's office. For example, these days they seem to concentrate more on the learner's discipline and not career guidance. There is need to have personnel's who are both competent and qualified to take up the role of career guidance as opposed to having offices focusing on disciplinary issues of learners.*

SESO 4 mentioned that;

*The role of the guidance and counselling office is key in shaping the minds of learners through guidance and counselling, unfortunately this seem not to be the case in most of the public schools.*

#### **4.7 Summary on the attitudes of Learners, Teachers, and other Educational Personnel on the School Provision of the Curriculum Framework Career Path-Ways in Secondary Schools.**

In an effort to draw perspectives of learners, teachers and other education personnel on their attitude the general response shows a mixed reaction and divergent views on curriculum career pathway and the services of the guidance counselling office. However, what is seemingly clear is that a cross section of the respondents is not just dissatisfied with various career pathways subject combination, but equally discontented with the role of the guidance and counselling office and the exponential number of subjects that any learner is required to take in any given career pathway.

#### **4.8 Conditions that affected the Implementation of the Curriculum Framework Career Pathways.**

Research question three was intended to obtain information from learners, subject teachers, Career Guidance Teachers, Heads of Department, Deputy Head Teachers and Senior Education Standard Officers on the Conditions that affected the Implementation of the Curriculum Framework Career Pathways.

#### 4.8.1 Educational Context

Participants were asked to describe the role of the school in the implementation of various career path-ways. This question was intended to understand the environment where the ZECF 2013 was projected for implementation. The majority of participants described the role of the school as cardinal in the implementation of the curriculum. However, effective implementation of the curriculum is primarily dependent on the availability and state of education infrastructure, availability of competent and qualified human resource, access to relevant teaching and learning materials and access to adequate financial resources. For example; HoD Business Studies from School D indicated that;

*The role of the school is to implement the curriculum career path-ways despite the challenges in terms of accessing relevant teaching and learning materials.*

Teacher 1 from school C stated that,

*For the academic path-way the school has done it very well but for the vocational path-way we have missed it... mainly because of limited financial resources.*

Guidance Teacher from School A mentioned that;

*The role of the school is critical because the teachers are the implementers who should ensure knowledge, skills and values are imparted to the learners*

Teacher 1 from school A also mentioned that;

*The role of the school in curriculum implementation is not a problem provided the school is supported with adequate infrastructure, human resource and financial resources. Apparently, this is a problem.*

In addition, in order to draw information on the policy environment where ZECF 2013 was projected for implementation, the question “How would you describe the establishment and structure of the school in relation to the implementation of the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provision?” was posed. From the various submissions made during the study, it could be deduced that there is a strategic relationship between a fully-fledged school and effective implementation of a curriculum framework. For example;

The Deputy Headteacher from School A mentioned that;

*The establishment and structure of the school has a bearing on curriculum implementation and the professional conduct of the individual teachers. From my experience by virtue of this school being a combined school, most teachers conduct themselves in the manner that you could describe as completely acceptable at a school like Roma girls and David Kaunda.*

Similarly, the views of the Deputy Headteacher from school A were echoed by the HoD Home Economics from School D who indicated that;

*The central weakness with a combined school administrative approach is that teacher discipline remains a major problem in instances where either Deputy Headteacher is not around, especially when it comes to secondary teachers obeying instructions from the Deputy Headteacher primary and this affect the effective teaching and learning process.*

HoD Social Sciences from School C equally mentioned that;

*in terms of infrastructure or facilities for a fully-fledged school, it is always an advantage. For example, one upgraded school in Chilenje stopped offering Design and Technology because the school did not have the infrastructure despite having qualified teachers in the subject. Therefore, upgraded schools usually have a huge fundamental problem of educational infrastructure which makes it difficult to effectively implement any curriculum career path-way.*

HoD Expressive Arts from School A mentioned that;

*As for this school we have a lot of challenges. Infrastructure is limited both for administration and teaching and learning, mainly because the background of this school is an upgraded one.*

HoD Natural sciences from School A mentioned that;

*The system of running a combined school has posed a serious challenge in the implementation of the curriculum. For example, at this school, we conduct end of term tests in term three (3) for non-examination classes, way before the grade seven (7) exams commence, because of the Examination Council of Zambia*

*regulation, teaching and learning comes to a hold until the following year, yet again fully-fledged schools learn continuously accordingly.*

Teacher 1 from school C mentioned that;

*The situation of this school being a combined school has very much affected the quality of teaching and learning and the general curriculum implementation. For example, at senior secondary level, grade 12 learners report for lessons at 07:00hours and knock off at 12:00hours meanwhile in other secondary schools' learners report for work at 07:00hours and knock off at 15:00hours, the learning and teaching time is never the same. Furthermore, even in terms of infrastructure, this school has limited infrastructure.*

HoD Business from School D mentioned that;

*For this school infrastructure is a problem and currently the school does not have an examination Centre, due of lack of science laboratory facilities. We usually lobby other schools to admit our learners for examinations.*

#### **4.8.2 Education Input**

In order to obtain the fundamental considerations that are relevant in the school selection of any curriculum career path-way for implementation, participants were asked about the factors that the school consider in the selection of the specific career path-ways. The general view suggests that basic inputs such as availability of qualified teachers, availability of relevant infrastructure, financial resources and teaching, learning materials and learner performance remained key in the school selection of any career path-way. For example;

HoD Mathematics from School B indicated that;

*It is pre-determined by the nature of the school but then in some instances the availability of human resource matters, for example, the school no longer offers Agricultural Science, because of the limitation in the human resource.*

In the same way, the perspective shared by the HoD Mathematics from school B was retaliated by Teacher 5 from School C who indicated that;

*The school looks at the availability of human resource. For example, the school intends to introduce Agricultural Science next year because the school recently received a teacher of Agricultural Science.*

HoD Home Economics from school D also stated that;

*I am not sure but there is a book in the headteacher's office that we use for career path-way selection.*

Similarly, the ignorance expressed by HoD Home Economics from school D, was equally comprehensible from HoD Expressive Art from School A, Guidance Teacher from School B and HoD Home Economics School F respectively who indicated that;

*I don't know I'm not sure maybe they follow the 2013 curriculum framework.*

*I'm not sure but the school has been implementing the same subject combination.*

*I don't know because I have never attended any meeting pertaining to curriculum career path-way selection.*

HoD Business Studies from School D explained that;

*Mainly it is the availability of specialised teachers for example we don't offer Agriculture Science here because we don't have a qualified teacher in agriculture science and very few classes are taking Business Career pathways because we only have a few teachers qualified to teach Principles of Accounts and Commerce.*

On the other hand, the Guidance Teacher from School D mentioned that;

*At this school, learners demand and interest for a particular subject has been determinant factor of late, for example the original plan has been to have one class for Art and Design and one class for Physical Education. But now, because of a huge number of learners in wanting to do Art and Design and Physical Education two classes were established for each subject for the learners who are currently in grade10.*

#### **4.9 Summary of the results on the prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career path-ways.**

The findings presented in this section suggest that, the key fundamentals that most public schools considered in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework at school level were; availability of qualified teachers in specific subjects, availability of education infrastructure, adequacy of financial resources, availability of teaching and learning materials, and availability of teaching and learning equipment. further, some schools also considered learner performance at grade nine (9), the location of the school, enrolment levels and learner performance in grade 12 final examination. However, it is important to note that there is a symbiotic relationship between a fully-fledged school and effective implementation of ZECF 2013. On the other hand, it is also important to note that some teachers including those in key administrative positions such as heads of department and career guidance teachers did not have the basic knowledge on key considerations that the school had considered over the years in the adoption and implementation of various curriculum career path-ways.

#### **4.10 Adherence to the Curriculum Framework Career Path-Way Provisions and Guidelines in Curriculum Implementation**

Research question four was intended to obtain information from Learners, Subject Teachers, Career Guidance Teachers, Heads of Department, Deputy Head Teachers and Senior Education Standard Officers about the school adherence to the provision and guidelines of the ZECF 2013.

##### **4.10.1 Curriculum Implementation Process**

The implementation of a standard curriculum was fundamentally projected to be conducted with the full cognisance of the set curriculum provision and guidelines. Thus, when participants were asked about their views and trend regarding public secondary school adherence to the curriculum career-path-way guidelines and provisions, without providing any form of collaborative evidence, the majority of the respondents indicated that their school strictly adhered to the ZECF guidelines and provisions. For example;

The Guidance Teacher from School E mentioned that;

*We adhere accordingly because we have to follow government policy, otherwise, we might be considered as opposing the government.*

HoD, Mathematics from School B indicated that;

*Generally, as a school we have been adhering to the Zambian education curriculum framework 2013 except that sometimes learners in the Natural Science career path-way have dropped Physics and Chemistry and opted to go for combined science.*

On the other hand, Senior Education Standard Officers indicated that while some schools could have been following the guidelines accordingly, some secondary schools in Lusaka district seem not to follow the guidelines and provisions in the ZECF 2013. For example,

SESO 4 mentioned that;

*Most public schools do not adhere to the provisions and guidelines of the curriculum as planned. For instance, there are schools in Lusaka district that are implementing up to 4 career path-ways...even 6 career path-ways meanwhile the directive is to implement 2 career path-ways only.*

SESO 3 indicated that;

*Most head teachers have not only altered the original document, but equally manipulated the curriculum framework in order to ensure that the document responds to their administrative needs as opposed to the needs of the learners.*

Teacher 5 from School A stated that;

*The school is not adhering to the provision and guidelines of the 2013 curriculum framework, due to the shortage of teaching and learning materials and infrastructure.*

Further, in order to verify secondary school adherence to the provisions and guidelines of the ZECF, a review of the school curriculum was conducted in all the sampled schools and the findings are presented in the table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Document analysis of the school curriculum**

<b>School</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Type of Curriculum</b>	<b>Sub-type of Curriculum</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Adherence Score (rate)</b>
School A	Class 1	Academic Curriculum Career pathway.	Social Science Oriented.	Maximum Adherence	1
School A	Class 2	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Performing and creative Arts Oriented.	Maximum Adherence	1
School A	Class 3	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Home Economics and Hospitality Oriented	-Literature in English not applicable. -Disregard for the subject combination. -Subject overload	0
School B	Class 1	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Technology Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School B	Class 2	Academic Curriculum Career pathway	Natural Science Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School B	Class 3	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Home Economics and Hospitality Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School C	Class 1	Academic Curriculum Career pathway	Business Studies Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School C	Class 2	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Performing and creative Arts Oriented	Omission of Literature in English and inclusion of Biology violates curriculum guidelines	0
School C	Class 3	Academic Curriculum Career pathway	Natural Sciences Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School D	Class 1	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Physical Education and Sports Oriented	-Inclusion of Science as it is not applicable in this career pathway. -Subject Overload.	0

School D	Class 2	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Home Economics and Hospitality Oriented	-Inclusion of both Religious Education and Civic Education instead of either Subjects. -Disregard of subject combination	0
School D	Class 3	Academic Curriculum Career pathway	Business Studies Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School E	Class 1	Academic Curriculum Career pathway	Natural Sciences Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School E	Class 2	Academic Curriculum Career pathway	Business Studies Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School E	Class 3	Vocational Curriculum Career pathway.	Technology Oriented	Inclusion of three optional Subject, Religious Education, Civic Education and History, instead of two.	0
School F	Class 1	Academic curriculum career pathway.	Social Science Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School F	Class 2	Academic curriculum career pathway.	Business Studies Oriented	Maximum Adherence	1
School F	Class 3	Vocational Curriculum career pathway.	Performing and Creative Arts Oriented	Inclusion of Biology as it is not applicable to this career pathway. -Disregard of Subject Combination.	0
Total Score					12

Table 4.2 provides a sample of the school curriculum that was reviewed through document analysis.

It was observed that the adherence rate to the guidelines and provision was as follows;

-School A- 2

- School B- 3

- School C- 2

-School D- 1

- School E- 2

-School F- 2

Average total adherence rate from the sampled schools of the classes was 12/18 which provides the total adherence rate out of 100% as 66.7%.

In Lusaka district, from the 6 sampled schools, the findings indicate that, the Business career pathway was the most common implemented career pathway, followed by Home Economics and Hospitality and Performing and Creative Arts career pathway. The third common implemented curriculum was Social Science and Technology career pathway. The least being implemented was Natural Science and Physical Education and Sports.

School implementation of the curriculum career path-way thus showed that;

- i. School A had 5 sub-curriculum career pathways namely Social Science, Performing and Creative Arts, Home Economics and Hospitality, Physical Education and Sports and Business Career path-ways.
- ii. School B had 3 sub-curriculum career pathways which are Technology, Home Economics and Hospitality and Natural Sciences career path-way.
- iii. School C had 5 sub-curriculum career pathways which are Social Science, Business, Natural Science, Performing and Creative Arts and Technology career pathway.
- iv. School D had 3 sub-career pathways which are Physical Education and Sports, Home Economics and Hospitality and Business Studies career path-way.
- v. School E had 4 career pathways which are Natural Science, Technology, Performing and Creative Arts and Business Studies career pathway.

- vi. School F has 4 career path-ways which are Social Science, Performing and Creative Arts, Home Economics and Hospitality and Business Studies career pathway.

In view of these research findings on the secondary school adherence to the provision and guidelines of ZECF, participants were asked about the conditions that affected curriculum adherence at school level. This question was vital because it helped the researcher to determine key factors that affected the overall implementation of the curriculum framework at school level. The majority of the respondents indicated that limited financial resources, shortage of qualified human resource and inadequate teaching and learning facilities remain the key factors that affected the effective implementation of the ZECF 2013. For example;

The Deputy Headteacher from School B stated that;

*Limited financial resources, negative attitude of the teachers, teacher lesson delivery and limited infrastructure affected the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework.*

Teacher 1 from School E also mentioned that;

*Limited infrastructure, shortage of human resource, poor conceptualisation of the curriculum framework due to poor engagement with teachers by the ministry of education. Lack of effective continuous professional development at school level.*

Guidance Teacher from School B mentioned that;

*Shortage of teaching and learning materials which includes laboratory chemicals. Government policy on school financing has made curriculum implementation difficult.*

HoD Natural Sciences from School A mentioned that;

*Workload, for instance, teachers of science have a huge workload that quite often, they complain about exhaustion and fatigue which has mostly been responsible for teacher absenteeism from work.*

Guidance Teacher from School F stated that;

*Poor work culture of teachers. For instance, imagine some teachers who have taught for some time have just given up on teaching but then the Headteacher has tolerated that and given such teachers administration positions such as human resource manager...*

HoD Home Economics from School F mentioned that;

*Learner absenteeism in third term due to learners seeking extra lessons elsewhere has really affected the 2013 curriculum implementation...*

Teacher 5 from school A

*Noise from the surrounding environment, limited teaching and learning facilities such as sports arena.*

On the other hand, participants were asked to describe the quality of education in relation to teaching and learning facilities, material and equipment at school level. The general response to this question demonstrated the acute shortage of relevant teaching and learning materials, academic equipment, laboratory apparatus, essential education infrastructure necessary for the effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum. For example;

Pupil 5 from School E mentioned that;

*The school does not have adequate computers. We only have 5 computers to cater for the seven classes that are doing Computer Studies.*

The challenge of access to ICT equipment and facilities was highlighted by Pupil 3 from school B and Pupil 5 from School E respectively who explained that;

*The school is not stocked with science apparatus especially for physics. we do not have adequate computers in the computer lab. In fact, most of the computers are broken down.*

*In this school, many times classes that take computer studies clash over access to the computer lab...a clear sign that we do not have adequate computer laboratory facility and computers.*

Pupil 8 from School F mentioned that;

*The number of classrooms is inadequate, for example the school has converted the Home Economics room into a classroom to accommodate the grade 10s...*

In the same vein, the systemic challenge of the state of basic education infrastructure was highlighted by Pupil 1 from school D and Pupil 4 from School E respectively who indicated that;

*We have a Home Economics room, but it is very small, in fact during practicals, we are usually divided into multiple groups and practicals tend to take the whole day and sometimes more than a day to finish. Again, there are no books and equipment for Home Economics, from time to time, we have been told to carry kitchen utensils and food stuffs from home.*

*For sciences, we do not have adequate teaching and learning materials. But again, we seem not to have adequate infrastructure because we learn from the physics lab, we suffer multiple class disruption when other classes want to use the lab.*

Pupil 6 from School A mentioned that;

*The school has no library... no conducive place designated for prep... as grade 12 we even struggle where to study from. But then, even when we decide to stay and study under a tree the Deputy Head teacher chases us from the school premises.*

Pupil 4 from school F indicate that;

*As learners we entirely depend on those learners who have bought recommended novels for Literature in English with their own money.*

Pupil 6 from School A mentioned that;

*At this school we do not have academic instruments such as board ruler, compass, protractor. Think of this... teachers draw various mathematical shapes... including a circle without using any instruments.*

Pupil 7 from school D mentioned that;

*This school has no industrial Arts workshop, relevant teaching and learning equipment in Design and Technology, always for practicals we usually go to*

*this named government school. But then...in situation where there is no transport...and sometimes in some situations we have been told that the learners at that school will be busy in their workshop we do not do practicals.*

#### **4.11 Summary about adherence to the Curriculum Framework Career Path-Way provisions and Guidelines**

In an effort to determine whether public secondary schools in Lusaka district adhered to the curriculum guidelines and provisions, the findings suggested that while the majority of the participants at school level indicated that the schools were adhering to the curriculum framework guidelines and provisions, with the aid of a document analysis of the school curriculum frameworks across all the six (6) schools sampled in Lusaka district, only one school demonstrated total adherence to the provision and guidelines of the curriculum framework. However, 33.3% adherence rate was observed as the lowest adherence in one school. Nevertheless, it is important to indicate that the general level of adherence to the curriculum guidelines and provisions was approximately around 66.7%.

#### **4.12 Summary**

In this chapter, the research findings of this study have been presented in line with the themes that emerged from the analysed data. The findings have been presented in form of verbatims under the specific emergent themes from the data that the respondents provided and tables with detailed description of the curriculum documents analysed through a document analysis. The next chapter is a discussion of the findings from the emerging themes and the policy implications of the theories to the overall research study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Overview**

In the previous chapter, research findings have been presented. In this chapter, a discussion of the research findings is provided with clear cognisance of the review of the related literature. This discussion of the research findings has been presented with reference to the main themes that emerged from the data.

### **5.2 Conceptualisation of the Curriculum**

The word conceptualisation refers to the process of defining and specifying the meaning of concepts to ensure clarity and understanding, forming the foundation for measurement and analysis (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). Thus, the perspective of HoD Business from School D that, the aims, goals and objectives were impossible to achieve and the argument from Teacher 1 from School A that, the aims, goals and objectives were disorganised as they did not account for the geographical, regional, social, economic and cultural diversity of Zambian citizens demonstrates a diversity in the conceptualisation of the intent, context and inputs necessary for effective curriculum implementation, especially with the respondents who mentioned that, the aims, goals and objectives were okay and attainable. But then, this variation in the conceptualisation of the curriculum framework should be a serious cause for concern as it broadly reflected poor engagement of the key stakeholders by the Ministry of Education on matters concerning the ZECF 2013 as indicated by Luhanga (2019); Mwanza (2017). In fact, going forward the failure by the Ministry of Education to justify and adequately explain the changes that accompanied the ZECF 2013 such as the fusion of the junior and senior secondary school levels may just be a pending educational complication in the conceptualisation of ZECF 2023. Lessons from the 2013 Curriculum Framework are that teachers especially should be well oriented each time a curriculum has been reviewed. It is hoped that the 2023 was done differently in terms of orienting teachers more effectively.

### **5.3 Curriculum Career Pathway Localisation and Adaptation**

According to Ng'omono (2016) localisation in curriculum implementation could be denoted as a leverage that an education institution exercises in adapting a curriculum to local conditions in order to ensure curriculum relevance. During the study most of the participants described curriculum localisation and adaptation as the best practice that would ensure the realisation of

various socio-economic advantages. According to Laeen, Ayati, San and Booreng (2019) localisation is generally viewed as the most appropriate means of realizing socio-economic relevance in curriculum implementation. However, some respondents raised concerns on the provision of curriculum career pathway localisation and adaptation such as localisation has the potential to undermine nationalism and national development because of the country's diversity in social, cultural and economic potential and it is associated with the challenge of availability of qualified human resource in teaching certain subjects that could fall under the localised curriculum. These concerns raised by the two respondents remain imperative as they raise matters of curriculum conceptualisation and curriculum planning prior to the development and implementation of the curriculum framework. In fact, issues of conceptualisation largely reflect limited participation of key stakeholders in the curriculum development process as earlier mentioned, as noted by Mwanza (2017); Ng'andu (2022). Besides, the shortage of qualified human resource demonstrates the inherent challenges in curriculum planning as noted by Masumba (2019); Musilekwa (2019).

On the other hand, it is important to note that while curriculum career pathway localisation was deemed an ideal and best practice in curriculum implementation as a measure of realizing curriculum relevance, Teacher 5 from school A and Teacher 7 from School C indicated that the most sustainable and progressive undertaking is to establish all public secondary schools as fully specialised schools in order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in curriculum implementation. In view of this proposal, although it should be mentioned that the issue of specialised schools has partially been conducted in some technical schools in Zambia such as David Kaunda and Hillcrest as mentioned by Kelly (1999), it is worth mentioning that establishing fully specialised school's ought to be a school of thought that is worth exploring going forward. In fact, Benarot (2006) mentioned that the advantage of a specialised secondary school is that, it fosters efficiency and effectiveness in resource allocation and management, equity and equality in access to education and strategically respond to curriculum diversification.

Alternatively, the view by the Deputy Headteacher from School F and SESO 3 that a good curriculum needs to respond to both the local and international needs provide an alternative dimension on the concept of curriculum localisation. According to MESTVTEE (2013) one of the key fundamentals of ensuring curriculum relevance was to ensure that the ZECF (2013) responds adequately and proportionally to the socio-economic needs of Zambian citizens at

local, regional and international level. In fact, ensuring a global citizenry with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes remain on the top list of the national agenda of the Zambian government as indicated by MoE (2023); MESTVTEE (2013).

#### **5.4 Curriculum Career Pathway**

In curriculum theory and practice, the expression curriculum career pathway refers to a unit of subjects that are assumed to guide learners towards specific professional career paths, detailing the subject's knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (Borchert, 2002). In view of this explanation, the general perspectives from the respondents demonstrated an array of concerns. For example, the response from Guidance Teacher from School D and Teacher 3 from school A that, while the subject combination could be okay, learners who move from one school to another for various reasons at different times have encountered systemic difficulties in relation to career pathway continuity and enhancement due to pathological variation in career pathway subject combination. At the same time, the notable suggestion was that going forward, especially in the 2023 curriculum, it would be better if some schools were to implement similar subject combinations in different districts or localities of the country. In view of the foregoing, it is seemingly logical to suggest that perhaps converting all public secondary schools into specialised schools could be gathering pace and momentum as a measure of responding to the needs of a Zambian learner irrespective of their circumstances in accessing quality education that responds to the individual needs of a learner as noted by Kelly (1999).

On the other hand, the view by the HoD Expressive Arts from School A that some subject combination does not have the interrelationship or linkage between and across subjects, seemingly suggest the widespread discontent and dissatisfaction with various curriculum career pathways. In fact, the HoD mentioned that learners who take Physical Education have not only demonstrated disinterest in Physics and Chemistry, but also wondered why and how science complement the career pathway in Physical Education and Sports. This submission clearly demonstrates what could be described as a 'technical oversight' by both the curriculum developers and the Ministry of Education. In fact, the implications of this technical oversight could largely be responsible for increasing academic dropout, among learners which could have been as a result of a disregard for the theory of multiple intelligence by Howard Gardner in the development of the ZECF 2013 career pathway design (Leshkovska and Spaseva, 2016). Nevertheless, it is also equally important to note that the introduction of Travel and Tourism, Computer Science and Economics as new subjects under the ZECF 2023 does not in any way

mitigate or rectify what has been identified as a weakness in either of the career pathways in the ZECF 2013.

Similarly, the submission by other respondents that, the merging of Industrial Arts subjects which include Geometric Mechanical Drawing, Woodwork, Power Electric, Material Science, Plastering and Bricklaying into a single subject called Design and Technology has undermined the primary intent of each individual subject of fostering relevant practical skills among the Zambian learners. In fact, the point of departure with this subject combination is that for an individual to be fully immersed and conceptualise a given career pathway a good number of the individual subjects in a particular career pathway need to be complementally and directly interrelated to a particular career pathway but this is not the case with the Technology career pathway and many other career pathways under the ZECF 2013. Therefore, the view that some subject combinations remain inherently poor is a clear demonstration of maximum disregard for what could be identified as subject complimentary effect.

Contrarywise, the concern by SESO 2 with regards to the ideal and maximum number of subjects in a career pathway and that having eight (8), nine (9) or ten (10) subjects is completely unnecessary as it undermines the basic effort required for returning learners' talent, interest and competencies acquisition. However, it is important to indicate that to a greater extent the issue of the maximum number of subjects could have equally been over looked by curriculum developers and the Ministry of Education. In fact, this technical neglect is evident with the prescription of the minimum number of subjects being six (6) maximum being seven (7) across all career pathways in the ZECF 2023 as opposed to the ZECF 2013 which did not provide a maximum subject limit for a learner.

Similarly, the submission by some pupils that eight (8) subjects in a career pathway are too many and completely unnecessary is a clear testimony of contempt and disregard for the democratic theory of education and theory of multiple intelligence by John Dewey and Howard Gardner respectively. This is principally because learners could have been forced to take the exponential load of subjects and a clear disregard for learners' ability and interest as noted by Leshkovska and Spaseva (2016).

On the other hand, it is important to indicate that under the ZECF 2013, all public secondary schools were duty bound to at least implement both the vocational and academic career pathway as mentioned by MESTVTEE (2013). However, it is important to note that during the

study the majority of the participants indicated that they were for the idea that the vocational career pathway remained compulsory to all the learners in Zambian public secondary schools in order to promote entrepreneurship, self-reliance and job creation among citizens (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019); (Luhanga,2019). However, a select few of the participants mentioned that making any vocational subject compulsory may be a complete disservice to both the learners and the Zambian education system, for the reasons that excellent performance in a subject does not mean interest on the part of the learner, as it could mean just effort to pass the subject. In fact, the submission by the Deputy headteacher from School F resonates with the democratic theory and the theory of Multiple intelligence by John Dewey and Howard Gardener respectively used in this study. Besides, making vocational career pathway compulsory to all learners is undoubtedly contradictory to the very policy framework that projected to advance the interest of the Zambian learner at secondary school level as indicated by MoE (2023).

Similarly, academic disinterest has apparently remained visible in learner's attitudes towards some practical subjects and subjects that were perceived to be bulky. For example; the indication by Teacher 7 from School F that, most of the learners who took Music and Art and Design had demonstrated maximum dislike and disinterest. Besides, Teacher 6 from school E and Teacher 3 from School F indicated that learners' disinterest is obvious in subjects that are considered to be bulky which includes but not limited to History, Geography and Literature in English as it is observed in high incidences of absenteeism during examinations. It is for this reason that Silumba (2021) for instance noted that the current status of History as a subject in most Zambian secondary schools remain a serious cause for educational policy and curriculum concern for the exponential increase in candidate's absenteeism during grade 12 final examination, as this trend reflect the growing unpopularity of the subject among learners.

## **5.5 Career Guidance**

Career guidance is a psycho-social activity of providing academic and industrial advice to a learner as a mechanism that would ensure that a learner makes an informed decision on his or her future career prospects through taking a subject combination that resonates and correspond to their interest, ability and future occupational prospects (Borchert, 2002). Thus, for the reason that the ZECF 2013 was a learner centred curriculum, career guidance services could be described as key in the implementation of various curriculum career pathways at school level as indicated by Bridgstock, Grant-Imaru and Alpine (2019); Allama (2023). Nevertheless,

during this study it was established that in Lusaka district, learner placement was seemingly conducted with no due regard to the stipulated standards and principles in the ZECF 2013. In fact, the responses seem to suggest that the majority of the educational practitioners were not satisfied with the prevailing practices of learner placement. For example, Teacher 1 from School A indicated that, “I have a problem with the way it is done at this school, normally we just look at the results of the learner as a basis for learner placement without asking the learner about their interest and also looking at their capabilities”. This trend remains completely at variance with the democratic education theory and the theory of multiple intelligence as noted by Leshkovska and Spaseva (2016).

In addition, the prevailing situation in public secondary schools of Lusaka district is not only completely at variance with the democratic and multiple intelligence theory but even so at variance with the conceptual framework of this study which provides that at the time of learner enrolment into secondary school, the school authorities through the guidance and counselling office, has a duty to organise and conduct a career guidance engagement meeting on the specific curriculum career pathways. The guidance and counselling meeting with the learners were intended to explain the rationale of each career pathway, giving specific details on subject combination and most importantly making it clear to learners that they reserved the democratic right to choose a specific curriculum career pathway and subject combination.

## **5.6 Educational Context**

The word context denotes the prevailing circumstances that form the setting for an event, situation or surrounding in which a particular phenomenon exists or could be acted upon by human effort (Kelly, 2004). During the study while the majority of the respondents described the role of the school as cardinal in the implementation of the curriculum framework, from all the six (6) sampled schools the majority of the participants mentioned that dilapidated and inadequate infrastructure, limited financial resources, shortage of qualified teachers and shortage of teaching and learning materials remained among the notable problems in curriculum implementation. However, it is important to note that the effective implementation of the curriculum is primarily dependent on the availability and state of education infrastructure, availability of competent and qualified human resource, access to relevant teaching and learning materials and access to adequate financial resources as mentioned by Kabombwe (2019) and MESTVTEE (2013). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the implementation of the ZECF 2013 was associated with multiple intrinsic challenges which

distorted what had been stipulated in the conceptual framework as the basic requirements necessary for effective curriculum implementation at school level.

In addition, it is important to indicate that there is a strategic interplay between a fully-fledged school and effective implementation of curriculum framework. During the study, HoD Social Sciences from School C indicated that upgraded schools usually had a huge fundamental problem of educational infrastructure which made it difficult to effectively implement any curriculum career pathway. Thus, in terms of infrastructure or facilities for a fully-fledged school, it is always an advantage. For example, one upgraded school in Chilenje stopped offering Design and Technology because the school did not have the infrastructure despite having qualified teachers in the subject. Consequently, in cognisance of the conceptual framework of this study, it is logical to argue that there was a complete technical failure on the part of the Ministry of Education in Zambia in recognising the fundamental role of the educational context in the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework. In fact, this failure is seemingly apparent in the implementation of the ZECF 2023 as noted in Ministry of Education Circular number MoE 101/18/53 (2023). Thus, the repetition of the challenges encountered under the ZECF 2013 remain bound to occur.

### **5.7 Educational Input**

In education evaluation the term input is used to refer to the basic resources, materials and strategies essential for effective curriculum implementation (Kelly, 2004). Thus, the fundamental consideration in the implementation of the ZECF 2013 for most public secondary schools included but not limited to availability of qualified teachers, availability of relevant infrastructure, financial resources and teaching and learning materials and learner performance. Essentially, while it is imperative for schools to consider the components like teacher education and training, textbooks, technology and funding in the implementation of a curriculum as noted by M.E.S.T.V.T.E.E (2013), the implication of this approach to curriculum implementation is that it undermines minimal efforts necessary for curriculum diversification as it leads to the neglect of other subjects and curriculum career pathway. For example, School D, could not offer Agricultural Science because the institution did not have any qualified teacher in Agricultural Science and very few classes had a Business Career pathway because the institution only had a limited number of teachers.

On the other hand, it is important to note that even after 10 years of the implementation of the 2013 curriculum framework, a cross section of the curriculum implementors had little or no understanding of the scope, basis, function and source of all the curriculum career pathway for example, the indication by the HoD Home Economics from school D, HoD Expressive Art from School A, Guidance Teacher from School B and HoD Home Economics School F respectively that

*I am not sure but there is a book in the head teacher's office that we use for career path-way selection. I don't know I'm not sure maybe they follow the 2013 curriculum framework. I'm not sure but the school has been implementing the same subject combination. And, I don't know because I have never attended any meeting pertaining to curriculum career path-way selection.*

Is such a serious indictment on the educational bureaucracy and its approach to stakeholder engagement on matters concerning curriculum development and implementation at school level. In fact, the ignorance expressed by the participants could be a direct result of the Ministry of Education and the Directorate of Curriculum Development's poor engagement approach with key stakeholders as indicated by Mwanza (2017); Changwe and Mwanza (2022); Ng'andu (2022).

## **5.8 Curriculum Implementation Process**

In the context of education evaluation, the aspect of process refers to the systematic steps, procedures and activities undertaken to implement the curriculum by means of teaching and learning at school level as mentioned by Kelly (2004). Under the implementation of the ZECF 2013, what is essential in the process of evaluation is to determine the extent to which various programmes were being implemented in accordance with the set guidelines and provisions. But then, the common response from the majority of the participants was that all the sampled school strictly adhered to the ZECF 2013 guidelines and provisions. For example, the Guidance Teacher from School E mentioned that, the school adhered to government policy, otherwise, the school might be considered as opposing the government. However, such a submission needed to be verified with respect to the set provisions and guidelines. For the reason that, some participants such as Teacher 5 from School A stated that, the school was not adhering to the provision and guidelines of the 2013 curriculum framework, due to the shortage of teaching

and learning materials and infrastructure. In fact, this was similar to what some scholars such as Masumba (2019); Mpofu et al (2021) highlighted in their studies.

On the other hand, it is important to note that some Senior Education Standard Officers indicated that while some schools could have been following the administrative guidelines on curriculum implementation accordingly, some secondary schools in Lusaka district did not follow the guidelines. For example, SESO 4 mentioned that most public schools did not adhere to the administrative guidelines on curriculum implementation. For instance, there were schools in Lusaka district that were implementing up to 4 career pathways...even 6 career pathways meanwhile the administrative directive was to implement 2 career pathways only. Besides SESO 3 indicated that, most Head teachers did not only alter the original document, but equally manipulated the curriculum framework in order to ensure that the document suited their administrative needs as opposed to the needs of the learners. This trend clearly presents a phenomenon that largely disregard curriculum diversification as stipulated by the MoE (2011). In fact, a disregard for curriculum diversification is a mismanagement of the education system in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Heyneman, 1985); (Purba, Sopandi & Wibowo, 2023). The submissions of the Senior Education Standard Officers were counterchecked by means of a review of the school curriculum with the aid of a document analysis which showed that the average total adherence rate from the six (6) sampled schools was approximately 66.7%.

Similarly, from the perspective of document analysis, it was established that there was a complete inherent and systemic neglect of some subjects in some career pathways such as Home Management and Fashion and Fabrics which fall under the Home Economics and Hospitality Career pathway. In fact, irrespective of the underlying circumstances leading to subject marginalisation in some career pathway it may be anticipated that under the ZECF 2023 subject marginalisation will actually be exacerbated in the curriculum implementation process, mainly because of the failure by the Ministry of Education to either highlight or attend to this problem as noted in the Ministry of Education Circular number MoE 101/18/53 (2023).

On the other hand, it is important to note that limited financial resources, shortage of qualified human resource and inadequate teaching and learning facilities remain the key factors that affected the effective implementation of the ZECF 2013. For example, the Guidance Teacher from School B mentioned that, shortage of teaching and learning materials which included laboratory chemicals and public policy on school financing had made curriculum implementation difficult. Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) explained that the public financial

policy through the national budget on education and skills sector in Zambia had essentially reduced from (20.2%) of the Gross national product (GDP) in 2015 to (16.1%) in 2018. But then, it is reasonable to argue that the ZECF 2023 will equally not yield any tangible results for the reason that the budget allocation for 2025 to the education sector was around 14.5% of the total national budget which has decreased by 9% from 15.4% in 2024 national budget. In fact, this allocation remains completely below the 20% threshold under the Education 2030 framework of Action (UNESCO, 2015).

Additionally, a scramble for access to computer laboratory facility at school level remain a clear sign of shortage of computers and limited access to Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilities which is a secondary and compound effect of constrained public financial policy to education. According to Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) a competency-based curriculum is resource intensive as it requires enormous resources that have to be directed towards the procurement of teaching and learning materials, capacity building and the recruitment of essential staff. Nevertheless, as earlier mentioned about the dismal success of the ZECF 2013, while the ZECF 2013 could be described as a failure as observed by MoE (2023), the ZECF 2023 is bound to be another challenging if not failed project and will remain nothing more than an education pipe dream as observed by Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019).

## **5.9 Summary**

In this chapter, a discussion of the research findings has been made under the specific emerging themes from chapter four. The discussion has been made with reference to the reviewed related literature, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Further, a discussion of the findings from the emerging themes and the policy implications of the theories to the overall research study has been made. The next chapter provides the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Overview**

In this chapter, a summary of the main research findings has been presented. Furthermore, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions on areas for future research have equally been made. This study was intended to evaluate the curriculum implementation of career pathways in public secondary schools in Lusaka district focusing on the 2013 competency-based curriculum framework as way of drawing lessons for the implementation of the 2023 curriculum framework.

### **6.2 Conclusions**

With reference to the main findings of this study and the objectives which were reflected in the research questions, the following conclusions were made:

In Lusaka district, a cross section of participants in this study demonstrated discontentment and dissatisfaction with the nature of the subject combination and the exponential number of subjects that a learner was required to take in various curriculum career pathways from the ZECF (2013). Therefore, it can be concluded that the development and design of the different career pathways seem not to have taken into consideration the needs and anticipations of beneficiaries of the career pathways especially the learners.

It can also be concluded that the role of the guidance and counselling office in most schools in Lusaka could be described as disoriented when it came to the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013.

All public secondary schools in Lusaka district considered the availability of qualified teachers in specific subjects, availability of education infrastructure, adequacy of financial resources, availability of teaching and learning materials and availability of teaching and learning equipment in the implementation of the 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework. This is because the majority of the participants indicated that in all instances where human resource was either not available or inadequate all optional subjects in any given career pathway were stopped being offered by the school.

In Lusaka district most of the public schools that encountered inherent difficulties in the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework were mostly combined schools and upgraded schools. Thus, in curriculum theory and practice, there is a symbiotic relationship between a fully-fledged school and effective implementation of the 2013 Zambia Education Curriculum Framework.

In some public secondary schools of Lusaka district, some teachers including those in key administrative positions such as heads of department and career guidance teachers did not have the basic knowledge on key considerations that the school had considered over the years in the adoption and implementation of various curriculum career pathways. Therefore, this broadly reflects the inherent weaknesses with the Ministry of Education approach to teacher orientation to both in service and novice teachers at school levels.

In Lusaka district, from the 6 sampled schools, only one school fully adhered to curriculum guidelines and provision of the career pathway and that the lowest level of adherence was around 33.33% from one public secondary school. Therefore, it may be concluded that the general level of adherence in the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 was approximately 66.7%.

In a descending order, most public secondary schools in Lusaka district implemented, Business, Home Economics and Hospitality, Performing and Creative Arts, Social Science, Technology, Natural Science and Physical Education and Sports career pathway. Besides, although some schools could have implemented Home Economics and Hospitality career pathway, only Food and Nutrition was being implemented in this career pathway. Therefore, the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 was associated with neglect of some subjects in some career pathway and these were Home Management and Fashion and Fabrics which fall under the Home Economics and Hospitality Career pathway.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

- i. There is a need for curriculum developers and educational policy makers to review the means and mechanisms that would ensure the attainment of the complementary effects of an individual subject to the rest of the subject in a given career pathway. This kind of mechanism should be based on the needs of learners who should equally be consulted during the development and design of the curriculum.

- ii. There is a need for the Ministry of Education to progressively convert all public secondary schools into specialised schools in order to enhance localisation and adaptation and efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of a specific career pathways.
- iii. There is a need for the Ministry of Education to enhance curriculum framework conceptualisation of the rationale and intent among teachers and educational administrators by means of developing a comprehensive orientation plan.
- iv. The Ministry of Education should upscale budget allocation to secondary schools, in order to enhance effective implementation of various curriculum career pathways.

#### **6.4 Proposed Areas for Further Research**

This study was carried out in selected public secondary schools of Lusaka district in order to evaluate the extent to which secondary schools effectively implemented the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 in line with the provisions and guidelines of the framework Career Pathways. However, further areas of research could be conducted on any of the following.

- i. A similar study could be conducted to evaluate the extent to which public secondary schools effectively implemented the 2013 curriculum framework in line with the provisions and guidelines of the framework career pathways in different parts of the country other than Lusaka.
- ii. In addition, an evaluation of the extent to which secondary schools effectively implemented the 2013 curriculum framework in line with the provisions and guidelines of the framework career pathways could be conducted using a mixed method design.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Document Analysis Guide

#### Section A.

A document analysis is intended to analyse:

- The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (2013) policy documents in order to establish career pathways at senior secondary school.

Category	Type(sub-type)	Compulsory subjects	Optional subjects	Maximum Number of Subject

-The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework Evaluation Report (2013) documents in order to provide clear information on teacher conceptualisation and attitude on the Zambian Education Curriculum Framework 2013 and strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats emanating from the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013.

Issue	Comment

#### Section B.

- The school curriculum policy document in order to determine the extent to which public secondary schools adhered to the provisions and guidelines of ZECF 2013 in Lusaka district.

School	Class	Type of Curriculum	Sub-type of Curriculum	Comment	Adherence Scores(rate)

## **Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Career Guidance Teachers, Heads of Department and Deputy Head teachers**

### **Section A: General Information**

1. For how long have you been in the teaching service?
2. For how long have you been occupying your present position?
3. What is the role of your office in the selection and implementation of the curriculum career pathways?
4. What is the total number of teachers in this school?
5. What is the total number of teachers in your department?

### **Section B: Conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. How would you describe the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambia Education Curriculum framework 2013?
2. What do you say about the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 organisation in terms of the career pathways?
3. How would you describe the role of the school in the implementation of various career pathways?
4. What do you say about the aspect of curriculum career pathway localisation and adaptation?
5. Are there some socio-economic opportunities or advantages provided to learners by the 2013 curriculum framework?

### **Section C: Attitude towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. What is your view on the learner placement approach to curriculum career pathways at school level?
2. What is your view about the nature of the subject combination in various curriculum career pathways?
3. What do you say about the implementation of the vocational career pathway as compulsory career pathways to all learners?

4. How would you describe learner's attitude towards some subjects in some career pathways?
5. How do you describe the role of the career guidance office in the implementation of the curriculum career pathways?

**Section D: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways.**

1. What factors does the school consider in the selection of the specific career pathways?
2. How has been the conduct of subject teacher in the implementation of some curriculum career pathways?
3. How would you describe the role of the school in the implementation of various career pathways?

**Section E: Adherence to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation.**

1. What conditions affect curriculum adherence at school level?
2. How would you describe the establishment and structure of the school in relation to the implementation of the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provision? (Combined school, fully -fledged schools).
3. What is your general view about the school adherence to the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provisions?
4. What is your overall comment/suggestion on the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 career pathways?

### **Appendix 3: Focus Group for Teachers.**

#### **Section A: Conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career path-ways**

1. How would you describe the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013?
2. What do you say about the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 organisation in terms of the career pathways?
3. What do you say about the aspect of curriculum career pathway localisation and adaptation?
4. Are there some socio-economic opportunities or advantages provided to learners by the 2013 curriculum framework?

#### **Section B: Attitude towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. What is your view on the learner placement approach to curriculum career pathways at school level?
2. What is your view about the nature of the subject combination in various curriculum career pathways?
3. What do you say about the implementation of the vocational career pathway as compulsory career pathways to all learners?
4. How would you describe learner's attitude towards some subjects in some career pathways?
5. How do you describe the role of the career guidance office in the implementation of the curriculum career pathways?

#### **Section C: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. What factors does the school consider in the selection of the specific career pathways?
2. How has been the conduct of subject teacher in the implementation of some curriculum career pathways?
3. How would you describe the role of the school in the implementation of various career pathways?

**Section D: Adherence to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation.**

1. What conditions affect curriculum adherence at school level?
2. How would you describe the establishment and structure of the school in relation to the implementation of the curriculum career path-way guidelines and provision? (Combined school, fully -fledged schools).
3. What is your general view about the school adherence to the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provisions?
4. What is your overall comment/suggestion on the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 career pathways?

## **Appendix 4: Focused Group Discussion Guide for Learners**

### **Section A. Attitude of learners on the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. What is your view about your subject combination?
2. How did you get to have the curriculum career pathway (subject combination) you are in now?
3. How is your academic interest in your curriculum career pathway (subject combination)?
4. What do you say about the dropout/retention rate across various subjects?
5. What is your view on the vocational career pathway being a compulsory career pathway at school level?
6. What is your view of teacher's attitude towards some curriculum career pathways?

### **Section B: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways.**

1. What do you say about the teaching and learning process across various subjects?
2. How do you describe the availability of teaching and learning infrastructure or facilities at school level?
3. What is your say over the availability and access to relevant teaching and learning materials, apparatus or equipment in this school?

**Appendix 5: Interview Guide for Senior Education Standard Officers, Assistant Director Curriculum Development and Assistant Director Standards.**

**Section A: General information**

1. For how long have you been the bearer of this office?
2. How would you describe the role of your office in the implementation of curriculum framework career pathways?

**Conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. How would you describe the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013?
2. What do you say about the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 organisation in terms of the career pathways?
3. What do you say about the aspect of curriculum localisation and adaptation by secondary school in the implementation of various curriculum framework career pathways?
4. How would you describe the realisation of the socio-economic opportunities or advantages of the curriculum framework 2013 provided to learners?

**Section B: Attitude towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. How do you describe learner placement approach to curriculum career pathways at school level?
2. What is your view about the nature of the subject combination in various curriculum career pathways?
3. What do you say about the implementation of the vocational career pathway as compulsory career pathways to all learners?
4. How would you describe learner's attitude towards some subjects in some career pathways?

**Section C: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

1. How would you describe the role of the guidance and counselling office at both provincial education office and school level in the implementation of 2013 curriculum framework?
2. What factors remain eminent in the selection of specific career pathways at school level?
3. Which career pathway do most secondary schools commonly implement?
4. How would you describe the conduct of subject teacher in the implementation of some curriculum career pathways?

**Section D: Adherence to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation**

1. How would you describe the implementation of the curriculum career pathway provision and guidelines by secondary schools in Lusaka district?
2. What conditions affect curriculum adherence at school level?
3. How would you describe the establishment and structure of public schools in the implementation of the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provision?  
(Combined schools, Fully- fledged schools).
4. What is your general view about public secondary school adherence to the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework Career pathway guidelines and provisions?
5. What is your overall comment or suggestion on the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 Career pathways?

## Appendix 6: Ethical Approval



### THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka 10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291 777 Fax: (+260)-211-290 258/253 952 | E-mail: [director.drugs@unza.zm](mailto:director.drugs@unza.zm) | Website: [www.unza.zm](http://www.unza.zm)

#### APPROVAL OF STUDY

***IORG No. 0005376***

***HSSREC IRB No. 00006464***

**REF NO. HSSREC-2024-DEC-025**

12<sup>th</sup> February, 2025

Ms. Kalumbu Manyika  
The University of Zambia  
P.O. Box 32379  
LUSAKA

Dear Ms. Manyika

**RE: "CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION OF CAREER PATHWAYS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LUSAKA DISTRICT: A CASE OF THE 3013 COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK"**

Reference is made to your submission of the protocol captioned above. The HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC:- 2024-DEC-025
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> February, 2025	Expiry Date: 11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2026
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2026
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered to, the approval may be suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled “late submissions” and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.
- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.

- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.
- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

Should you have any questions regarding anything indicated in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at the above indicated address.

On behalf of HSSREC, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study.

Yours faithfully,



**DR. J. I. Ziwa**  
**CHAIRPERSON**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

**CC:** Director, Directorate of Research, Innovation and Development  
Assistant Director (Research), Directorate of Research, Innovation and Development  
Assistant Registrar (Research), Directorate of Research, Innovation and Development

**Appendix 7: Letter of Permission to Collect Data from Schools**

All Correspondence should be addressed  
to the District Education Board Secretary

Telephone: 0211-240250/240249/0955 623749  
E-mail: desbsisk@yahoo.co.uk



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**  
**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

*In reply please quote*

No:.....

**DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY**  
**P.O. BOX 50297**  
**LUSAKA**

2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2024

The Headteacher

..... School

**LUSAKA**

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH – MS. MANYIKA  
KALUMBU**

This serves to introduce to you Ms. Kalumbu, Computer No. 2023007787, dully registered student at the University of Zambia who has been granted permission to conduct research at your school.

However, ensure that her program does not interfere with the learning schedules.

Kindly welcome her and give her all the necessary support accordingly.

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Ian Miyoba (Mr.)  
District Education Board Secretary  
**LUSAKA**

/sp

**Appendix 8: Letter of Permission to Collect Data at Provincial Education Office.**

PEO/LR/101/28/2

All communications should be addressed to:  
The Provincial Education Office and not  
To only individual

Telephone: +260-2111250655/251220  
Fax : +260-251009



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICER  
LUSAKA REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
PRIVATE BG RW 21E  
LUSAKA

In reply please quote

No. ....

18<sup>th</sup> November, 2024

Ms. Manyika Kalumbu  
School of Education  
**UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**RE: REQUEST FOR ENGAGEMENT ON PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY**

Refers to the above captioned subject.

My office is in receipt of a minute copied to my office dated 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2024 where you requested for authority to conduct a study on the '**Curriculum Implementation of Career Path-Ways**' by conducting an interview with the Senior Education Officer; Guidance and Counselling and Senior Education Standard Officers (Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Practicals, Expressive Arts, Business Studies and Natural Sciences).

I am glad to inform you that permission has been granted to her to conduct her research work.

Kindly ensure that the student is assisted with relevant information.

  
Ngoma Felix Z  
**PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICER**  
**LUSAKA PROVINCE**

/kbn

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Document Analysis Guide

#### Section A.

A document analysis is intended to analyse:

- The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (2013) policy documents in order to establish career pathways at senior secondary school.

Category	Type(sub-type)	Compulsory subjects	Optional subjects	Maximum Number of Subject

-The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework Evaluation Report (2013) documents in order to provide clear information on teacher conceptualisation and attitude on the Zambian Education Curriculum Framework 2013 and strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats emanating from the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013.

Issue	Comment

#### Section B.

- The school curriculum policy document in order to determine the extent to which public secondary schools adhered to the provisions and guidelines of ZECF 2013 in Lusaka district.

School	Class	Type of Curriculum	Sub-type of Curriculum	Comment	Adherence Scores(rate)

## **Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Career Guidance Teachers, Heads of Department and Deputy Head teachers**

### **Section A: General Information**

6. For how long have you been in the teaching service?
7. For how long have you been occupying your present position?
8. What is the role of your office in the selection and implementation of the curriculum career pathways?
9. What is the total number of teachers in this school?
10. What is the total number of teachers in your department?

### **Section B: Conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

6. How would you describe the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambia Education Curriculum framework 2013?
7. What do you say about the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 organisation in terms of the career pathways?
8. How would you describe the role of the school in the implementation of various career pathways?
9. What do you say about the aspect of curriculum career pathway localisation and adaptation?
10. Are there some socio-economic opportunities or advantages provided to learners by the 2013 curriculum framework?

### **Section C: Attitude towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

6. What is your view on the learner placement approach to curriculum career pathways at school level?
7. What is your view about the nature of the subject combination in various curriculum career pathways?
8. What do you say about the implementation of the vocational career pathway as compulsory career pathways to all learners?

9. How would you describe learner's attitude towards some subjects in some career pathways?
10. How do you describe the role of the career guidance office in the implementation of the curriculum career pathways?

**Section D: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways.**

4. What factors does the school consider in the selection of the specific career pathways?
5. How has been the conduct of subject teacher in the implementation of some curriculum career pathways?
6. How would you describe the role of the school in the implementation of various career pathways?

**Section E: Adherence to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation.**

5. What conditions affect curriculum adherence at school level?
6. How would you describe the establishment and structure of the school in relation to the implementation of the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provision? (Combined school, fully -fledged schools).
7. What is your general view about the school adherence to the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provisions?
8. What is your overall comment/suggestion on the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 career pathways?

### **Appendix 3: Focus Group for Teachers.**

#### **Section A: Conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career path-ways**

5. How would you describe the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013?
6. What do you say about the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 organisation in terms of the career pathways?
7. What do you say about the aspect of curriculum career pathway localisation and adaptation?
8. Are there some socio-economic opportunities or advantages provided to learners by the 2013 curriculum framework?

#### **Section B: Attitude towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

6. What is your view on the learner placement approach to curriculum career pathways at school level?
7. What is your view about the nature of the subject combination in various curriculum career pathways?
8. What do you say about the implementation of the vocational career pathway as compulsory career pathways to all learners?
9. How would you describe learner's attitude towards some subjects in some career pathways?
10. How do you describe the role of the career guidance office in the implementation of the curriculum career pathways?

#### **Section C: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

4. What factors does the school consider in the selection of the specific career pathways?
5. How has been the conduct of subject teacher in the implementation of some curriculum career pathways?
6. How would you describe the role of the school in the implementation of various career pathways?

**Section D: Adherence to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation.**

5. What conditions affect curriculum adherence at school level?
6. How would you describe the establishment and structure of the school in relation to the implementation of the curriculum career path-way guidelines and provision? (Combined school, fully -fledged schools).
7. What is your general view about the school adherence to the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provisions?
8. What is your overall comment/suggestion on the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 career pathways?

## **Appendix 4: Focused Group Discussion Guide for Learners**

### **Section A. Attitude of learners on the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

7. What is your view about your subject combination?
8. How did you get to have the curriculum career pathway (subject combination) you are in now?
9. How is your academic interest in your curriculum career pathway (subject combination)?
10. What do you say about the dropout/retention rate across various subjects?
11. What is your view on the vocational career pathway being a compulsory career pathway at school level?
12. What is your view of teacher's attitude towards some curriculum career pathways?

### **Section B: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways.**

4. What do you say about the teaching and learning process across various subjects?
5. How do you describe the availability of teaching and learning infrastructure or facilities at school level?
6. What is your say over the availability and access to relevant teaching and learning materials, apparatus or equipment in this school?

**Appendix 5: Interview Guide for Senior Education Standard Officers, Assistant Director Curriculum Development and Assistant Director Standards.**

**Section A: General information**

3. For how long have you been the bearer of this office?
4. How would you describe the role of your office in the implementation of curriculum framework career pathways?

**Conceptualisation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

5. How would you describe the aims, goals and objectives of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013?
6. What do you say about the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 organisation in terms of the career pathways?
7. What do you say about the aspect of curriculum localisation and adaptation by secondary school in the implementation of various curriculum framework career pathways?
8. How would you describe the realisation of the socio-economic opportunities or advantages of the curriculum framework 2013 provided to learners?

**Section B: Attitude towards the school provision of the curriculum framework career pathways**

5. How do you describe learner placement approach to curriculum career pathways at school level?
6. What is your view about the nature of the subject combination in various curriculum career pathways?
7. What do you say about the implementation of the vocational career pathway as compulsory career pathways to all learners?
8. How would you describe learner's attitude towards some subjects in some career pathways?

**Section C: Prevailing conditions that affect the implementation of the curriculum framework career pathways**

5. How would you describe the role of the guidance and counselling office at both provincial education office and school level in the implementation of 2013 curriculum framework?
6. What factors remain eminent in the selection of specific career pathways at school level?
7. Which career pathway do most secondary schools commonly implement?
8. how would you describe the conduct of subject teacher in the implementation of some curriculum career pathways?

**Section D: Adherence to the curriculum framework career pathway provisions and guidelines in curriculum implementation**

6. How would you describe the implementation of the curriculum career pathway provision and guidelines by secondary schools in Lusaka district?
7. What conditions affect curriculum adherence at school level?
8. How would you describe the establishment and structure of public schools in the implementation of the curriculum career pathway guidelines and provision?  
(Combined schools, Fully- fledged schools).
9. What is your general view about public secondary school adherence to the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework Career pathway guidelines and provisions?
10. What is your overall comment or suggestion on the implementation of the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013 Career pathways?

## Appendix 6: Ethical Approval



### THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka 10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291 777 Fax: (+260)-211-290 258/253 952 | E-mail: [director.drugs@unza.zm](mailto:director.drugs@unza.zm) | Website: [www.unza.zm](http://www.unza.zm)

#### APPROVAL OF STUDY

***IORG No. 0005376***

***HSSREC IRB No. 00006464***

**REF NO. HSSREC-2024-DEC-025**

12<sup>th</sup> February, 2025

Ms. Kalumbu Manyika  
The University of Zambia  
P.O. Box 32379  
LUSAKA

Dear Ms. Manyika

**RE: “CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION OF CAREER PATHWAYS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LUSAKA DISTRICT: A CASE OF THE 3013 COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK”**

Reference is made to your submission of the protocol captioned above. The HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC:- 2024-DEC-025
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 12 <sup>th</sup> February, 2025	Expiry Date: 11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2026
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	11 <sup>th</sup> February, 2026
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered to, the approval may be suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

## **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled “late submissions” and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.
- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.

- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.
- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

Should you have any questions regarding anything indicated in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at the above indicated address.

On behalf of HSSREC, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study.

Yours faithfully,



**DR. J. I. Ziwa**  
**CHAIRPERSON**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

**CC:** Director, Directorate of Research, Innovation and Development  
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/kbn