

**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TEACHING GEOGRAPHY IN JUNIOR  
SECONDARY SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES: A STUDY OF SELECTED SCHOOLS  
IN SERENJE DISTRICT- ZAMBIA**

**BY**

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**A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Geography Education**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, **SIMFUKWE FRANK**, do hereby declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotes of other people in this study, which have been duly referenced and acknowledged herein, is the result of my original research work. I also declare that this work has not been previously or concurrently submitted, either in whole or in part, for a similar purpose or otherwise, to University of Zambia or any other university.

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This dissertation of **SIMFUKWE FRANK** has been approved as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of **Master of Education in Geography Education** by the University of Zambia.

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## **DEDICATION**

To Vera Nachangala, the love of my life for the constant encouragement.

Dan, Humphrey, Agness, Queen, Gift and Frank, my precious children, for sacrificing the time I should have spent with you but spent working on this dissertation.

And to Dad, Mr. Danford Simfukwe, and Mom, Ms. Nawale Mainess, for having had unwavering faith in what I could achieve in life and for teaching me to put God first in all that I did.

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges and opportunities presented by teaching and learning of Geography as part of Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level in Serenje district of the Central Province in Zambia. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the challenges faced by learners when learning Geography in Social Studies in selected secondary schools in the district; to investigate the challenges faced by teachers in the delivery of the Geography component in Social Studies in the selected secondary schools; and to explore the opportunities that would facilitate improved teaching and learning of Social Studies in secondary schools in Zambia. A descriptive research design utilising the qualitative approach was used in conducting the study. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, lesson observation, and document analysis. The sample of participants comprised four heads of the Social Sciences department, sixteen teachers of Social Studies and sixteen learners. All the participants were purposively sampled with a view that they were knowledgeable and well informed about the subject under investigation. The data were analysed using thematic analysis and presented as verbatim quotes. The study revealed that teachers lacked training in teaching Social Studies (hence lacked both content knowledge and pedagogical know-how); teachers mostly used teacher exposition, with low-levels of active learner involvement; there was a paucity of teaching and learning materials for the Geography component; some learners at junior secondary school level were of low calibre because of the automatic qualification policy; and there was no robust monitoring of teachers either by school authorities or district inspectors. Lack of subject content knowledge by teachers deprived learners of the necessary information required for them to excel in the subject. Topics that posed a challenge for teachers were sometimes deliberately ignored or skipped. Lack of pedagogical know-how meant that teachers mostly used the transmission method to teach Geography, a subject which otherwise requires active participation of the learners. Lack of learning materials, particularly textbooks, meant that learners received instruction without learning aids, which made learning difficult. The syllabus for Social Studies was distributed to all the schools but without textbooks and other materials to support teaching and learning. Also, lack of monitoring resulted in laxity on the part of teachers who resorted to note-giving instead of actually teaching. Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made: the government should, as a matter of urgency, deploy teachers who are trained to teach Social Studies; government should supply schools with necessary requisites for teaching and learning Social Studies while schools, on their part, should find ways of obtaining relevant Geography teaching and learning materials; schools could revert to the old system (of separated Geography, History and Civics) until such a time as necessary arrangements are put in place for teaching and learning Social Studies; teacher competency should be improved through vigorous in-service training (or capacity building) and CPD). Further studies can be conducted on the short comings concerning the junior secondary social studies.

**Keywords:** Geography Education, Social Studies, Teaching.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASESP	-	Africa Social and Environmental Studies Programme,
ASSP	-	Africa Social Studies Programme
CDC	-	Curriculum Development Centre
CPD	-	Continuing Professional Development
DEBS	-	District Education Board Secretary
DES	-	Department for Education and Science
ECZ	-	Examinations Council of Zambia
FGD	-	Focus Group Discussion
GIS	-	Geographic Information System
GPS	-	Global Positioning System
HOD	-	Head of Department
ICT	-	Information and Communication Technologies
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
NCSS	-	National Council for the Social Studies
PCE	-	Primary College(s) of Education
PCK	-	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
SSME	-	Social, Spiritual and Moral Education
STEM	-	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
UBE	-	Universal Based Education
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
USA	-	United States of America
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
ZATEC	-	Zambia Teacher Education Course
ZBEC	-	Zambia Basic EducationTeacher's Course

- ZECF - Zambia Education Curriculum Framework
- ZPD - Zone of Proximal Development

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Overview

This chapter contains the background to the study, statement of the problem, aim of the research, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, limitations, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and the operational definition of terms.

### 1.2 Background

Geography and Social Studies are two subjects that may provide necessary knowledge and skills to learners at secondary school level. Geography is an old established discipline both global wise and in Zambia. Watson, (1953, p. 313) states that “the discipline had an early start; the ancient world was productive of its cosmogonies and travelogues.” The subject is concerned with people and place. It enables learners to see how people adapt to their environment and how human activities have modified the environment. It fosters abstract thinking as learners master geographical concepts and think critically about, and examine, issues and social problems affecting their communities. Through geographical enquiry, learners learn to observe, record, make inferences and draw conclusions.

Social Studies, on the other hand, is a relatively newer subject with its development as an academic discipline going back to the 1950s. The subject was an attempt to compress several branches of learning into one (The Royal Geographical Society, 1950). As a result, Social Studies is an interdisciplinary subject consisting of subjects such as History, Economics, Social Anthropology, and Geography. Drawing its subject matter from both the social sciences and the humanities, Social Studies is quite a vast, versatile and dynamic subject. Learning Social Studies enables learners to acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary for good citizenship (Mambwe, 2019 & Mambwe et al., 2019). The subject is known to inculcate into the learners the abilities and skills that will make them become effective and functional members of the society. Through this, the subject helps learners to master their environment, and to explore and harness available resources in their environment for solving societal needs and bettering people’s lives (Mezieobi et al., 2012).

The essence of education is to provide the citizenry with essential knowledge, values and skills to operate effectively in their communities. In this regard, Namafe and Chileshe (2013) assert that Zambian institutions of learning should provide *quality* and *relevant* education to the country's citizenry. Similarly, the Curriculum Framework of 2013 stipulated that "the philosophical rationale for educational provision is to nurture the holistic development of all individuals and promote the social and economic welfare of society." This objective cannot be attainable without any deliberate policy in place to support the value that the country attaches to education. Therefore, Zambia's education system has put an education curriculum policy in place which has to deal with the country's cultural and intellectual heritage as well as the knowledge and skills that need to be passed on to future generations (Curriculum Framework, 2013). It is in this light that the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) prescribed Social Studies as one of the subjects to be offered in the Zambian National Educational Curriculum at primary and secondary school levels in Zambia. At primary school, Social Studies draws its subject matter or content from four formerly independent subjects, namely Civics, Geography, History and Religious Education while at secondary school it excludes Religious Education which stands on its own at that level. Therefore, the Geography content has now been embedded and subsumed in Social Studies.

Lonsdale (1958, 2013) argues that subject matter of geography by itself will only be part of the picture in realising the goals of Social Studies. The content of Social Studies must of necessity have two dimensions – subject matter and method – each which is equally important. Social Studies teachers must be able to effectively communicate with learners, as well as build their trust, motivate them, and understand their needs (Mambwe et al., 2019). Bednarz (1997) asserted that Geography and History are complementary subjects best taught together within the Social Studies curriculum. According to her, the two subjects are like twins: one cannot teach History without Geography or Geography without History. The argument is that when historians teach, they make sure their students know the locations of all the places they are studying or where an event happened. On the other hand, geographers look not only at where things are located, but why and how they got there.

However, there is also a counter-argument that geographic perspective is not strongly represented in the modern Social Studies curriculum, because most Social Studies teachers receive their training in History (or Civic Education) and have little or no background in Geography (Bednarz, 1997). That is why in secondary schools there is specialisation because

some subjects demand application of theories and not just memorising events. This view is furthered by Mackinder, a geographer of note, who in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, wrote:

*... I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not advocating in Universities and Training Colleges, and in regard to higher secondary education, the joint teaching by single teachers of Geography and History... I have asked that Geography should be taught by trained geographers. In the upper half of elementary education and lower tiers of secondary education you have, however, to deal with something totally different. There what I suggest is the teaching of a single subject, Geography and History. In these stages of education let us have one subject, but let that subject be taught by a teacher who has learnt both Geography and History, and they learnt them separately. (Mackinder, 1913, p. 5)*

Undoubtedly, Mackinder is not against the notion of combining subjects but expressly states that, within that arrangement, the individual subject areas must be taught by teachers who are trained to deliver the content appropriately.

These new developments have, therefore, necessitated the retraining of teachers to equip them with new knowledge and methods of teaching. In addition to understanding the new content and methods, teachers also have to understand how to procure new teaching and learning materials and other related equipment for Social Studies, and funding the programme and process of curriculum implementation (CDC, 2013). Okello and Kagoire, (1996) observed that the success of the curriculum depends on the teachers, and the quality of education in a country largely depends on the quality of teachers. While it is important to underscore the value of curriculum to holistic and sustainable development, it is also prudent to recognise the various sources of systematic barriers within education systems that could derail the implementation of quality curricula. For example, even the best curriculum can be undermined by the lack of appropriately qualified teachers. This simply calls for a sufficient supply of trained teachers if the implementation of the curriculum is to be effective because, if the quality of teachers is poor, then it is impossible to achieve quality education. At the time of this study, the teaching of Social Studies in Zambian schools still depended on specialised teachers who were trained to only teach specialised subjects, that is, Geography, Civics, and History. Bearing this in mind, the major concern of the study was to find out if the revised curriculum was being effectively implemented to provide relevant and quality content materials for secondary school education to pupils in Zambian schools. The trend in Social Studies examination results since 2015 had consistently indicated poor performance of pupils in Social Studies at Grade 9; the national

average in the subject was below 50% pass mark (Table 1). During this period, learner performance was only lower in Mathematics.

**Table 1: Performance of Grade 9 candidates in Social Studies from 2015-2019 in National Examinations.**

<b>Year</b>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>National Mean %</b>	44.04	39.65	44.12	38.2	40.22

Source: ECZ Statistical Bulletins for 2015-2020.

The Examinations Council of Zambia attributed the higher failure rate in Social Studies to poor performance in Geography-related components of the subject (ECZ, 2015 - 2019). These components were map work, mathematical geography, graphs, diagrams and charts (ECZ, 2015). From this report, it is evident enough that the Geography component of Social studies contributed highly to poor performance in general.

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

The new 2013 Junior Secondary School Social Studies syllabus in Zambia has combined three subjects, namely Geography, History and Civics into one subject called Social Studies. This implies that pupils no longer write three distinct examination papers at the end of their Junior Secondary School course. Teacher training in colleges have also been restructured in a similar pattern to allow teachers to train in Social Studies teaching. However, such teachers have not been offloaded on the market to take up the task. At the time of implementation teachers who were to handle Social Studies as single subject were not yet offloaded on the market. The current practice is that all the three components of the new subject is taught by one teacher. This approach of teaching of Social Studies using teachers who have a background of specialisation inevitably presents teachers with a set of challenges. Kenworthy (1962) notes that Social Studies as a field is as wide as the world and requires wide minds. In such a diverse field, the geographic perspective is not always strongly represented, both in content and methodology; because a teacher trained in History or Civics may have little or no background (or interest) in Geography. In Zambia, performance of learners in Social Studies has been the subject of several studies over the past years as it occupies a very important place in education (Mambwe, 2019; Mambwe et al., 2019; Mulemi, 2011; Lufungulo, 2015; Mbulo, 2015 & Samwimbila, 2017). Although these studies were conducted concerning the implementation of Social Studies in Zambian schools, there is still not much information available on the

challenges and opportunities presented by the teaching of Geography in Social Studies in the country. This paucity in information makes it difficult to ascertain the reasons for poor learner performance at Grade 9 and the interventions that should be taken to improve performance at that level. It was, therefore, imperative to conduct a study to assess the teaching of Junior Secondary Geography in Social Studies in Zambian schools and also suggest opportunities of enhancing the teaching of Geography components in Social Studies.

#### **1.4 Aim**

The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges and opportunities presented by the teaching and learning of Geography as part of Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level in Serenje district.

#### **1.5 Objectives**

The objectives of the study were to:

- 1.5.1 Establish the challenges faced by learners in Geography lessons of Social Studies in selected secondary schools of Serenje district.
- 1.5.2 Establish the challenges faced by teachers in the delivery of the Geography lessons in Social Studies in secondary schools in Serenje district.
- 1.5.3 Identify the opportunities that would facilitate improved teaching and learning of Geography lessons of Social Studies in secondary schools in Zambia.

#### **1.6 Research Questions**

The main research questions for the study were as follows:

- 1.6.1 What challenges do learners face in the learning of the Geography lessons in Social Studies in selected secondary schools in Serenje district?
- 1.6.2 What challenges do teachers face in the delivery of the Geography lessons in Social Studies in those schools?
- 1.6.3 What opportunities are available for improving the teaching and learning of Geography lessons in Social Studies in Zambian secondary schools?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The background to this study had shown that the teaching of Geography in Social Studies may have several challenges. The importance of the study, therefore, was that the findings may help improve the way Geography was taught in Social Studies in Zambia. Junior Secondary Schools. It was also hoped that the study would help to guide policy makers on how to tackle problems faced by teachers of Geography in Social Studies in the country. This may inevitably positively impact performance and the results in Social Studies examinations. In this way, the study may contribute to Zambia's aspiration to provide learners with twelve years of quality and relevant primary and secondary school education, which is also the aspiration of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 4.1. The study may also contribute to the body of knowledge on how to teach multidisciplinary subjects.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the Study**

The concept of delimitation refers to the boundaries or confines of a study. In this vein, the current study was limited to four Junior Secondary Schools selected in Serenje district. Additionally, the study only addressed the challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level, not any other level. The study was limited to the Junior Secondary School Geography component of Social Studies, the findings may not be generalised to other school sectors (for example, primary school) and other subject areas (for example, History and Civics).

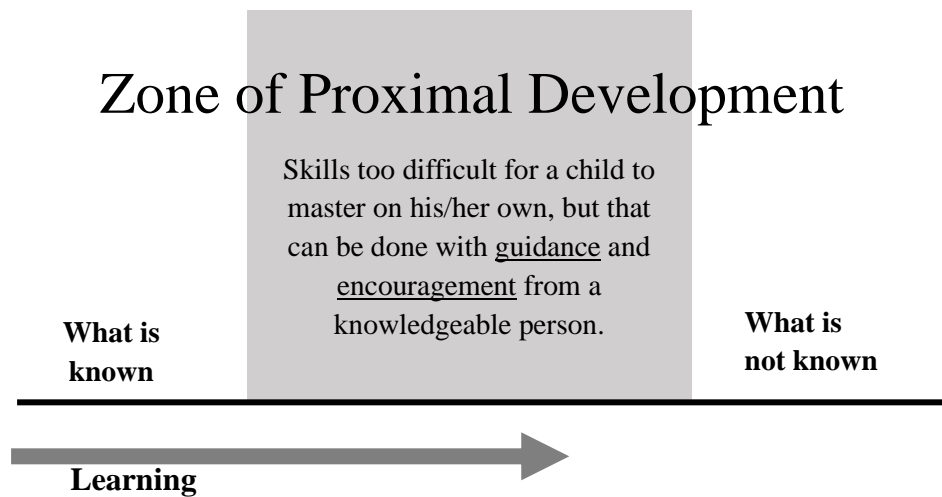
### **1.9 Limitations**

Considering the fact that Serenje district is vast, the researcher laboured to reach all the selected schools and this did not affect the outcomes of the research. In addition, the researcher created some time to reach the study sites despite heavy workload at place of work. The researcher struggled to marshal the funds required to complete the study as he could not access any sponsors. However, the little resources that were available made the researcher achieve his objectives. This is because the challenges and opportunities may be completely different in these sectors and subject areas.

### **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework is a structure based on an existing theory in a field of inquiry that is related to and/or reflects the hypothesis or premise of a study (Adom, Hussein & Adu-Agyem, 2018). It helps with the formulation of the assumptions about the research being undertaken

and how it relates with the world. This study was underpinned by social constructivism theory of learning and teaching as proposed by Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky placed emphasis on the role of the teacher in the educative process, in particular the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding, as central to instructional enhancement and classroom change in learning (Figure 1). Social constructivism argues that humans are born into a world in which meaning has already been made; they are born into culture. For Vygotsky, culture gives the child the cognitive tools needed for development. Adults in the learner’s environment are conduits for the tools for the acquisition of the culture, which include language, cultural history, social context, and more recently, electronic forms of information access. “We come to inhabit a pre-existing system and to be inhabited by it” (Crotty, 1998).



*Figure 1: Zone of Proximal Development*

(Source: Dixon-Krauss, 1996, p. 18).

Figure 1 shows that, in order for the learners to move from what they already know (prior knowledge) to what they do not know (new knowledge), the role of the teacher is to guide and encourage them through this Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). It also shows that, that kind of help can only come from a knowledgeable adult or teacher. To help the learners to accommodate and assimilate new information with their current understanding, the knowledgeable teacher will use scaffolding, that is, he or she will assist the learners with skills that are new or beyond their ability (Montet, 2020). The new knowledge is added to the learners’ schemas of prior knowledge where the learners construct knowledge. The role of the teacher, therefore, is to design learning environments that can provoke the kinds of thoughtful engagement that helps learners develop effective thinking skills and attitudes that contribute to

effective problem solving and critical thinking. Research results have shown that when children are assisted by an adult, they perform better at the task than the children who worked independently.

Constructivism also posits that learning should be relevant and situated within a meaningful context (Renkl, 2001). This idea was developed by the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau and influenced numerous educators in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as John Dewey (1859–1952) and Maria Montessori. It led to inquiry-based and discovery learning models which are emphasised in Geography education. The main idea here is that learners learn best when they can see the usefulness of what they learn and connect it to the real world.

The constructivist theory has relevance to this study in several ways. To begin with, it stipulates that those skills which are too difficult for a learner to master on his or her own can be done with guidance and encouragement from a *knowledgeable person*. This assertion is important because the central argument for this study is that Geography can ably be taught only by a qualified teacher of Geography (Mackinder, 2013). Further, Geography has practical algorithms or procedures for observation, recording, analysis and interpretation of geographic data. The constructivist theory emphasises collaborative and interactive learning over transmissive learning. Therefore, a teacher of Geography can use the tenets prescribed by constructivism to ensure effective teaching and learning of content of a geographic nature. Through collaborative learning, ZPD and scaffolding, the teacher takes the learners from their actual level of development shown by unassisted performance to their potential level as indicated by assisted performance. For example, through interaction with the teacher and peers, learners can learn map reading and interpretation skills and how to undertake field study. The knowledgeable teacher may model pupil behaviours and/or provide verbal instructions for the learners. The learners seek to understand the actions or instructions provided by the teacher and internalise the information, using it to guide or regulate their own performance.

Whereas History and Civics teachers may also be conversant with collaborative learning and the need for scaffolding, the knowledgeable teacher to teach geographic algorithms will be a teacher trained to teach Geography. As indicated earlier, however, the Geography component in Social Studies is also being taught by teachers trained to teach History or Civics.

### **1.11 Operational Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following terms were taken to have the following meanings:

<b>Curriculum</b>	A curriculum refers to all the learning which is planned or graded by a school whether it is carried out individually or collectively, inside or outside the school.
<b>Junior secondary education</b>	Refers to formal school education offered at grades eight and nine levels in Zambia.
<b>Knowledgeable teacher</b>	Is one who would more effectively help learners to learn a particular subject area.
<b>Learning</b>	refers to the acquisition of knowledge, skills or/and values through study, experience, or being taught.
<b>Prior learning</b>	Refers to learning gained by learners from a variety of sources outside the classroom.
<b>Social Studies</b>	In the <i>Zambian</i> education system, <i>Social Studies</i> is a subject which integrates multiple fields of study from the <i>social</i> science and humanities, including History, Geography, and Civics. Its aim is to prepare young people to become responsible citizens.
<b>Sustainable development</b>	Is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend.
<b>Teaching</b>	Is the conscious and deliberate effort by a mature or experienced person to impart knowledge, skills and values to a less experienced person, with the intention that the latter will learn or come to believe what s/he is taught on good grounds.

### 1.12 Summary

This chapter has explained the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the research objectives and questions. It also gave the significance of the study, its delimitation, limitations, and operational definitions of terms. It has been observed in the chapter that, since the creation of Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level, the

Geography component has also been taught by teachers trained to teach History and Civics. The problem is that not enough information is available on how effectively the Geography component is being taught, hence the need for the study. The chapter concludes with an explanation of the theoretical framework that guided the study. The next chapter reviews the literature related to the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Overview**

In this chapter, relevant literature is reviewed. As pointed out by Kombo and Tromp (2006), literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by other scholars and researchers. In the context of this study, the literature reviewed concerned the history of Social Studies, the importance of Social Studies in sustainable development, the challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography as part of Social Studies, Examination Council of Zambia reports, attributes of quality and relevant education and aspects of the 2013 curriculum framework relevant to Social Studies. The chapter concludes with a summary of the gap that existed in the literature that this study hoped to fill.

#### **2.2 Importance of Social Studies in the School Curriculum**

The quality of educational experiences gained by the learners in the learning of the Junior Secondary School Social Studies matters a lot as it helps them to understand issues related to the environment in which they live with respect to changing societal needs. The focus of teaching and learning in the social studies, history, and geography curriculum is on the development of essential knowledge and skills. Learners must develop a thorough knowledge of basic concepts that they can apply in a wide range of situations. They must also develop the broad-based skills that are vital to success in the world of work: they must learn to evaluate different points of view and examine information critically to solve problems and make decisions on a variety of issues. It is, therefore, important that the Junior Secondary School Social Studies curriculum for any given nation is initiated so as to appreciate or improve the educational experiences of the learners amidst societal dynamics. The quality of the Social Studies taught and the effectiveness of their instructional strategies in the classroom are crucial in the effective implementation of the programme. In the context of the Junior Secondary School Social Studies curriculum for Zambia, competent and appropriately trained teachers are desirable to teach the different components of the subject. Such teachers should not just be conversant with the content but should also possess appropriate pedagogical skills to teach that content. In the current curriculum, one concern is the absence of teachers who can effectively teach the Geography component of Social Studies. According to Mata (2012) the knowledge

and attitudes of teachers regarding curriculum innovation needs to be reported by curriculum designers, education policy makers as well as the teaching fraternity. She states that change in educators is important because the main barrier to curriculum innovation is teacher educator resistance to change. Some teachers are failing to cope up with change o embrace change.

### **2.3 Definition of Social Studies**

Many definitions of Social Studies embody the element that the subject studies human enterprise across space and time; that it helps to explain the social and physical world in which humans live, particularly how people live and work together. For example, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, 1994) in the USA defined Social Studies as the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. Okobia (2011) however, sees Social Studies education as the study of man in his environment. That is to say that Social Studies education deals with man’s cultural, social, religious, physical and economic environments. Osakwe (2014) defines Social Studies education as “an integrated field of study that attempts to study man in depth within the ramification of his dynamic environments as well as equipping him with positive knowledge, attitudes, values and skills for purpose of producing competent, humane and effective citizenry who can contribute positively to the good of the society”. It also examines the effects of science and technology in the social and physical environment. It is the study of humans in society with various aspects working together. Mambwe and Lufungulo (2022, p.2) also pointed out that “Social studies has a place and goal in the world of academia to enrich a child’s knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of his or her society”. It includes primarily History, Geography and Civics, it also deals with materials from other subjects. Thus, some elements of other subjects are included in various courses in the Social Studies. Even if these subjects are not all taught in the schools under their titles, they make their contributions to the Social Studies.

As a field of study, Social Studies may be more difficult to define than is a single discipline such as History or Geography, precisely because it is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. It is also sometimes taught in one class and sometimes in separate discipline-based classes within a department of Social Studies. Two main characteristics, however, distinguish Social Studies as a field of study: it was designed to promote civic competence; and it was integrative, incorporating many fields of endeavour (National Council for the Social Studies, 1994).In Social Studies, geographical education contributes to the long-standing tradition of examining the manner in which different influences play their part in giving a place its character. As

subscribed by the Department for Education and Science (DES, 1990), geography facilitates the promotion of understanding, tolerance and friendship amongst all nations, racial and religious groups and fosters the activities of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace. Furthermore, a geography curriculum contributes to the learners' knowledge of being aware of the way decisions are made and the factors that influence those decisions.

## **2.4 History of Social Studies**

Ross (2020) asserts that Social Studies education has had a turbulent history as one of the core subjects in the school curriculum. The American Historical Association (1944, 2018) explains that, from about 1850 to about 1910, History, Civics, and Geography were generally regarded as rather sharply differentiated subjects; there was no common interest to bring them together. Social sciences like sociology, economics and political science were thought of as the only subjects designed for the study of society and its institutions. Economics had won a place in the curriculum late in the nineteenth century while sociology began to appear in school programmes early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, Social Studies as a discipline did not exist as a distinct subject before the Second World War. Adler (n.d.) explains that soon after the Second World War, people in the United States of America began to realise that the understanding of man and his problems in society required a lot more than what was covered by the social sciences. As social elements in the curriculum continued to constantly increase, teachers and scholars began to realise that the five subjects, namely History, Geography, Civics, Economics, and Sociology, were closely related. Since all these subjects centre their attention upon man and his relationships, it was a matter of convenience to group them under some general term. Social Studies came to be that general term. Therefore, Social Studies is an interdisciplinary subject that draws upon history, geography, ecology, economics, law, philosophy, political science and other social science disciplines.

In the United States of America, Social Studies education initially started in 1916 when the Social Studies movement was formed as a result of the influence of John Dewey and the Progressive education movement of the early twentieth century (Adler, n.d.; Salia-Bao, 1990). In that year, a Report of the Social Studies Committee of the National Education Association also appeared in Bulletin 28 of the Bureau of Education (Wesley, 1937). According to Ross (2020), there was widespread agreement then that the main aim of Social Studies was citizenship education, that is, the preparation of young people so that they possessed the

knowledge, skills, and values necessary for active participation in society. Adler (n.d.) explains that,

*the emphasis on citizenship development was understandable. At the time, because of increased immigration from non-English speaking countries, educators were given the task of teaching English and "the American way of life" in addition to their content areas. As World War I raged in Europe, social studies courses were viewed as a means of developing patriotism among the new foreign-born citizens.(Para. 3)*

Today, Social Studies is taught in kindergarten through grade 12 in schools across the United States of America(Johnson, 2010).

In Canada, the Social Studies programme reflects multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and Francophone that contribute to Canada's evolving realities (Thompson, 2004; Ottmann & Pritchard, 2010). It fosters the building of a society that is pluralistic, bilingual, multicultural, inclusive and democratic. The programme emphasises the importance of diversity and respect for differences as well as the need for social cohesion and the effective functioning of society. It promotes a sense of belonging and acceptance in learners as they engage in active and responsible citizenship at the local, community, provincial, national and global level. A pluralistic view recognizes that citizenship and identity are shaped by multiple factors such as culture, language, environment, gender, ideology, religion, spirituality and philosophy. The programme of studies is designed to promote cognition through critical reflection, questioning, decision making and consideration of multiple perspectives on issues. Through this process, learners will strive to understand and explain the world in the present and to determine what kind of world they want in the future. Whereas historically Canadian schools have served the needs of the nation-state and nationhood, they are currently serving the needs of the global marketplace (Thompson, 2004).

The introduction of Social Studies in Britain was not an easy task. Obiadi, (1980) stressed that Social Studies came about as a result of the missing link in Britain. The First World War of 1914 and the European war happened to expose what was actually missing for human understanding learned on lessons from the wars, it became necessary for them to go back to schools to learn a lot about human relationship and what it is meant to the society. For more than two decades, the study of Social Studies had gained a foothold in the 1950s committees which were set up by the Ministry of Education to study about the importance of studying

Social Studies. Various reports were submitted by the committees. Some of them were in favour while others strongly opposed its inclusion in the school curriculum for fear that it might replace other traditional subjects. Despite these oppositions, Social Studies went through successfully and was given a place in the school curriculum.

Social Studies spread from America and Britain to Africa in the early 1960s. About that time, many African countries had just become independent and wanted to overhaul their entire education systems in order to meet the aspirations of an independent African country. Thus, the adoption of Social Studies as a subject was to make education more relevant to the needs of the society (Olaleye, 1992). Merryfield (1988) states that, during that time, social science content, methods and objectives became known in Africa as 'Social Studies'. One of the aims of the Mombasa Conference held in 1968 was to introduce Social Studies in the newly independent member countries, which aspired to discard curriculums left behind by the colonial powers. The conference concluded that a new approach based on integration of the traditional subjects (history, geography, and civics), and some elements from economics, sociology, and anthropology, was needed. After the conference, Social Studies started to gain popularity on the continent of Africa. The establishment of Africa Social Studies Programme (ASSP) in 1969 (now known as Africa Social and Environmental Studies Programme, ASESP) helped the seventeen member countries, namely Botswana, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, to spearhead the development of Social Studies curriculum and instruction on the continent (Merryfield, 1988).

In Nigeria, the teaching of Social Studies in schools has an important history. Since 1960 when the country got independent, several conferences and seminars were held in a bid to enunciate concrete policies needed for the teaching of the subject in Nigerian schools. The most important conference was that of 1969 (the National Curriculum Conference, held in Lagos) where the goals and objectives of education were clearly defined (Obebe, 1980). Awopetu (2001) states that Social Studies is now a core-subject both at the primary and junior secondary levels of education in Nigeria. The subject is also taught in Colleges of Education as well as Technical Colleges in the country, and some universities also award degree in Social Studies up to the Ph.D. level.

In Zambia, Social Studies was introduced at the primary school level by the Education Act of 1966 which paved way for some reforms in primary and secondary education (MoE, 2013). In

2000, based on the national policy on education, *Educating Our Future of 1996*, the Teacher Education Department of the Ministry of Education transformed the Zambia Basic Education Teacher's Course (ZBEC) to the Zambia Teacher Education Course (ZATEC). With the view that learners do not view their life and experiences in neatly compartmentalised segments but in a holistic way without boundaries, ZATEC adopted the concept of *study areas* into which subjects were grouped according to clearly definable relationships among them. The twelve traditional subjects that were offered by ZBEC were integrated them into six study areas. This marked the birth of Social, Spiritual and Moral Education in colleges of education.

Since the year 2000, Zambia has experienced rapid socio-economic change which prompted a revision of the curriculum in the education sector. In 2014, the curriculum was revised by Government through the Ministry of Education, with the help of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The 2013 Curriculum Framework provided for the development of a curriculum through a consultative process with stakeholders drawn from directorates at the Ministry of Education, the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ), universities, Colleges of Education, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), Civil Societies, Civic and Traditional Leaders, as well as other government departments (MoE, 2013). In essence, Social Studies was introduced in Junior Secondary Schools to tailor the school curriculum to the changing educational needs in the country (Mwale, 2015).

The revised curriculum was designed according to the type of education that the nation preferred and adopted. As stated by the Ministry of Education (MoE 1996), the rationale for educational provision was to nurture the holistic development of all individuals and to promote the social and economic welfare of society. The revised curriculum, therefore, endeavoured to enable the country's education system inculcate knowledge, skills and values in the minds of its citizens by effectively responding to their social and economic roles to the complexity of the modern world and the environment in which they live. Some knowledge, skills and technological development change so rapidly that the country considered reviewing education continually. The renewal was backed by the National Policy on Education, *Educating our Future (1996)* which was developed with a view to respond to the developmental needs of the nation as well as those of the individual learners. It was for this particular purpose that the 2013 curriculum framework was developed to provide a clear articulation of the direction the country's education ought to take in this modern world (MoE, 2013).

For South Africa, which became independent much later than Zambia, Social Studies was introduced in schools in a bid to achieve national unity at the end of the era of apartheid in the early 1990s (Motala & Pampallis, 2002). At independence in 1994, South Africa was a highly fragmented country due to the racial segregation policy of the apartheid regime. After independence, an attempt was made to redress past imbalances and to introduce a radically new curriculum (Nel & Binns, 1999). Iyer (2018) asserts that,

*With the cessation of apartheid in 1994, social transformation was one of the key objectives of the democratic South Africa. In light of this, the South African government believed that mass education would develop a democratised mindset amongst the country's citizens. History and Geography were identified as two subjects that could promote the desired societal transformation and were thus combined into one learning area: Social Sciences.*

From the three country cases described here, it can be concluded that the nature and scope of Social Studies and the purpose for which it is taught in schools may vary from country to country but the overarching emphasis is on citizenship development, that is, to teach knowledge, skills and values that are responsive to learner and societal needs.

## **2.5 Performance of Learners in Social Studies Examinations in Zambia**

This section reviewed past Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) reports made by chief examiners with regard to the general performance of learners in Social Studies from inception. It also revealed the challenges associated with the teaching of Social Studies and the solutions that were suggested by the chief examiners.

The 2015 chief examiner's report revealed that the highest failing proportion among secondary school candidates was observed in Mathematics (48.63%) followed by Social Studies (36.43%). Performance analysis using grade distribution showed that the majority of candidates fell in the grade four and fail categories. Candidates that scored grades 1 and 2 were only 42 235 out of 276 883 representing 15.26%. The performance of candidates in practical subjects was better than in non-practical subjects. New subjects with practical components such as Art and Design (54.28%), Design and Technology (48.92%), Physical Education (46.46%) and Musical Arts Education (43.39%) performed above 40 percent. The mean score in the other subjects was below 40 percent. These subjects were Computer Studies (30.07%), Integrated

Science (33.92%), Agriculture Science (30.36%), Social Studies (36.72%) and Business Studies (31.53). As can be seen in this report, Social Studies stood among the least.

Performance ranking according to province was done using the aggregated scores of candidates obtained in the best six subjects. In 2015, Central Province, the province in which Serenje district is located, was ranked 8<sup>th</sup> out of 10 provinces and the years that followed showed that Central Province was still trailing at the bottom. This dire situation gave impetus to this study.

As a result of the lowly performance in Social Studies, the chief examiners' report made the following recommendations:

- (a) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) meetings should be reinforced in institutions of learning and administrators should ensure that all teachers attended such gatherings.
- (b) Subject associations should also support teachers by contributing to some of the CPD activities.
- (c) Frequent monitoring of teachers by the relevant institutions should also be done.
- (d) Teachers should endeavour to teach all the topics in a subject to allow learners have a wider choice during the examinations.
- (e) Assessment should be conducted frequently by the teachers and the administrators. Home work should be given by teachers regularly.
- (f) Pupils should be taught interpretation of maps, graphs, statistical data, diagrams, charts, pictures and passages.
- (g) Teachers should be trained in Social Studies.

The 2016 ECZ report showed that, at grade 9 level, Business Studies, Social Studies and Religious Education were among the twelve subjects that recorded a pass percentage lower than 40% at 33.17% and 39.65%, and 30.27%, respectively. Therefore, yet again, Social Studies ranked among the lowest performing subjects at Junior Secondary School level. Among other reasons for the candidates' poor performance in Social Studies were misinterpretation of questions, lack of essay writing skills, little understanding of the subject matter, poor grammar, and inability to interpret symbols, graphs, diagrams, picture as well as locating places and physical features on the maps (ECZ, 2016). From the chief examiners report, it is evident that the Geography component of Social Studies posed a big challenge. Unlike History and Civics, Geography questions are characterised by the features stated in the report. Some of the

recommendations in the chief examiner's report were that there should not be selective teaching of topics by teachers; planning, monitoring and evaluation should be emphasised by administrators to enhance effectiveness and efficiency; and that homework and class exercise should be given by teachers on a daily basis or frequently. The report further suggested that interpretation of maps, graphs, statistical data, diagrams, charts, pictures and passages should be enhanced. The other recommendation was that schools should continue having continuous Professional Development (CPD).

The 2017 report showed an improvement in performance at Junior Secondary School in Social Studies by 1.7%. However, the report from the chief examiner indicated that most candidates did not do well in Paper 2, especially in answering the essay type questions. Recommendations similar to those of 2015 and 2016 were made on how to improve examination results in Social Studies. The recommendations that teachers should be trained in Social Studies and that schools should continue having CPD clearly showed that Social Studies education required a well-trained cadre of teachers specifically to teach the subject single handed. These recommendations are the most relevant in the context of this study. Teachers of the Geography component of Social Studies need skills in interpretation of maps, graphs, statistical data, diagrams, charts, pictures and passages.

## **2.6 Challenges of Teaching Geography in Social Studies**

Teaching Social Studies presents teachers with a unique set of challenges not always found in other disciplines. Grabenstein (2000) asserts that becoming an effective Social Studies teacher requires more than just a love of political science, history, and philosophy. This section examines the challenges of teaching Geography together with other social sciences.

The first challenge presented by teaching Geography in Social Studies, and important to this study, is lack of proficiency in teaching Social Studies by some teachers. Gökçe (2000) scrutinized the teacher education programmes in Turkey and found that, although Geography education was included in teacher training programmes for Geography and Social Studies, there were not enough qualified instructors to teach Geography education. This inevitably led to the removal of some Geography courses from the programmes, a situation which negatively affected Geography education. For the United States of America, Adler (n.d) noted that, in some programmes, instructors were not specialists in Social Studies, or may not have been well acquainted with the field itself. With such kinds of instructors, questions about the nature and goals of the field may be dealt with only superficially or not at all. In this vein, Grabenstein

(2009) affirms the assertion that teaching of Social Studies requires a great deal of training and planning.

Concerning the vast field covered by Social Studies, Wallace (1954) asks if it is necessary for each teacher of Social Studies to be a specialist in one of these fields, then to approach the subject through the methods and disciplines appropriate to that specialisation, putting the material in a form acceptable to its appropriate discipline, keeping in mind his social consciousness? From the introduction, Mackinder (2013) suggested that at lower levels of education, let us have one subject, but let that subject be taught by a teacher who has learnt both Geography and History, and they learnt them separately. Currently, however, the training of prospective Social Studies teachers is such that, in some programmes, pre-service teachers major in Social Studies and take a broad array of courses across History, Geography and Civic Education. In other programmes, they major in one field and take one or more courses in each of the other Social Studies disciplines. Adler (n.d.) asks: “How can prospective Social Studies teachers be prepared both broadly and deeply in all the areas they are expected to teach?” Experience has more influence on a career than qualifications. Already established teachers have a role to induct new teachers on new developments in the education sector.

The second challenge is lack of time to adequately cover all the three component subjects of Social Studies. In an article titled ‘*U.S. Students Are Really Bad at Geography*’ Lauren Camera, a senior education writer, noted that nearly three-quarters of eighth-graders in the USA tested below proficient in Geography on the 2014 National Assessment of Educational Progress (or the Nation’s Report Card), a result almost exactly the same as in 1994 (Camera, 2015). The article further reported that a report from the Government Accountability Office found that more than half of Social Studies teachers spent 10 percent or less of their time on Geography. The key challenge to providing Geography education, therefore, was the increased focus on other subjects in Social Studies. For example, as early as 1951, studies at Bakersfield College in California, USA, had shown that History was emphasized to the neglect of other fields, and map study was neglected (McAuley, 1952). Other studies have similarly revealed that time allocated to Social Studies on the school time table is not adequate (Zubrzycki, 2016; Moobola & Mulenga, 2020). This, in turn, affected the amount of time devoted to Geography.

The third challenge is the bulky nature of Social Studies, particularly the Geography component. De Guzman et al. (2017) conducted a study of the unpopular aspects of Geography lessons in Social Studies in terms of the contents of the discipline. The study covered a total of

62 Social Studies teachers from Botolan district, Division of Zambales, Philippines and used action research as the research design. The study found that the unpopular aspect of teaching Geography as to contents were the voluminous factual information which had to be considered by teachers during lesson planning and the long Geography lesson duration.

The fourth challenge of teaching Geography in Social Studies was that teachers required mastery of how to use various paraphernalia and instructional resources to teach the subject. De Guzman et al. (2017) state that teachers agreed that teaching Geography demanded a regular use of instructional resources and more reference books and materials. According to De Guzman et al.,

*the teachers agreed that mastery of using maps, globes and charts was also identified as difficult aspect of teaching Geography lessons. The result could mean that there are still limitations on the teachers' technical knowhow on the usage of map, globe and charts in teaching Geography. According to Gokce (2014), map reading and use of globe are necessary skills that students must learn and develop. On the other hand, New York State Social Studies Resource Toolkit (2013) stressed that teachers' mastery of using maps, globe and chart allows the student to further understand aspects on interactions of different elements and features in Geography. (p. 67)*

The fifth challenge relates to methodology. According to Kaya (2018), one of the problems related to Geography methodology is teachers' wide use of teaching methods that are based on explaining concepts rather than active and interactive learning. The primary underlying justification for this is the overpopulation of classrooms and behavioural training teachers formerly receive. Whereas the issue of over enrolment may be beyond the control of the schools, methods used by teachers can be attended to by schools. A study by Ng'eno (2015) in Kenya, for example, recommended training and re-training of teachers; in-service training for teachers will present them with proper guidance on teaching methods and how to use necessary and relevant materials. According to Adler (n.d.), in-service and staff development occurs in both formal and informal ways. Informally, training can take place through workshops and seminars, and also through collegial and administrative interactions. On the other hand, formal mechanisms explicitly aim at guiding teacher development by creating and implementing teacher induction programmes. According to Adler (n.d), these programmes are intended to provide support for beginning teachers as they deal with day-to-day challenges. Often, a beginning teacher is paired with an experienced teacher who serves as an advisor, guide, and

sounding board. The goal of teacher induction programmes is to both assist and retain novice teachers and revitalise mentor teachers.

Temel (1988, p. 21) argues that a teacher who aspires to perform their profession in adherence to the modern education and training principles should not be considered as a person who merely gives lectures, holds exams and gives marks. In addition to giving lectures, a teacher should also take on the tasks of organisation, management, guidance, observation and evaluation. The originators of Social Studies, Progressive educators, deemphasise the acquisition of facts and instead emphasise the role of reasoning and problem-solving in learning. Ferlazzo (2012) observes that the best advice he can give Social Studies teachers who want to be more effective is to remember that we teach students, not content.

It is also important to integrate discipline-specific knowledge and skills like geographical thinking and geographic literacy in Social Studies. It is imperative for learners to learn how to examine primary and secondary documents and evaluate diverse sources for perspective, veracity, and meaning - the real-world work of Geography professionals.

Douglass (n.d.) states that:

*whether taught as a separate subject or fused in some way with subject matter drawn from other fields of the natural and social sciences, there is a long history of ineffectiveness of instruction in the teaching of geography.... How is it that geographic instruction appears to be so ineffective? One reason may be that teachers generally are not themselves geographically literate. One teaches what one knows, and today's teachers are as much a product of their schooling as anyone else. It might be hoped that professional geographers would be able to communicate the nature of geographic literacy and would be effective in educating teachers for the task of teaching geographic concepts. Unfortunately, the number of professional geographers is limited - hardly a drop in the bucket when compared to the number of professional historians. (Para. 3)*

This statement also shows that Geography can ably be taught by professional geographers, not people who have studied other fields.

Under the creation of Social Studies, the traditional subjects of Geography, History, and Civics were fused. In this context, the teaching of Geography began to lose its identity as a unique area of study. Lebowski(2011) asserts that progressive hybridization of disciplines and

specialties upset the identity of Geography in modern science. Lebowski (2011) argues that the division of science into disciplines has been necessitated by the diversity of their subject matter. This means that the content of Geography is discrete from that of History and Civics, although Douglass (n.d.) argues that Geography and History are not defined by the uniqueness of their content but by the way they organise and analyse the data they collect regarding particular aspects of the human experience.

The foregoing shows that there are many problems of teaching Geography in Social Studies. Among these is the capabilities of teachers, which is the main concern in this study.

## **2.7 Opportunities for Teaching Geography in Social Studies**

Integrating Geography and History is not a new idea (Rocca, 1994). It has been there since the days of Eratosthenes and Ptolemy. Although the rise of the field of the Social Studies has today caused some apprehension as to its effects upon the study and significance of both Geography and History, some scholars have thought in terms of a group of subjects instead of the single subjects. Frederick Jackson Turner, a U.S. historian of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and Immanuel Kant, an influential German philosopher in the Age of Enlightenment realised that all human experiences occur in time and place. James and Martin (1981) assert that “the essential elementary aspects of human society are those of time and space. While History compares and contrasts information within the framework of chronology (time), Geography organises its information within the context of the spatial environment (place). In other words, History, as a science, deals with the description and classification of objects in time, and Geography, in space. As indicated earlier on, Bednarz (1997) was of the view that Geography and History are complementary subjects best taught together within the Social Studies curriculum. Preston James, on his part, declared that these two aspects cannot in reality be separated: that History should be taught geographically, and that Geography should be taught historically (James, 1941, p. 334). Turner further reasoned that integrating these two synthesising subjects provides for a more complete picture and a deeper understanding of historical events and people than if each were taught separately (Block, 1980). According to Douglass (n.d.), Geography and History both gain their distinction by the way in which they organise and analyse the data they collect regarding particular aspects of the human experience, not by the uniqueness of their content. Where historians report their findings primarily through written narratives, geographers present their data primarily through the construction of maps.

Martorella (1991) recognised the need for developing integration strategies that would increase awareness within the Social Studies curriculum. Learners gain experience in Geography skills such as understanding latitude, longitude, scale, map elements, spatial analysis, GIS, and GPS. Social Studies teachers, then, must use spatial perspectives in all History lessons; without them, the events of History lack ties to real places on earth. Traditional geographic integration in the Social Studies, as displayed in textbooks, relied heavily on using maps to find and identify locations. Although this is certainly an important basic skill that should be part of every History unit plan, it should be viewed as a means toward the intrinsic geographical knowledge necessary to impart a spatial dimension to History and not simply as a skill. The quality of the Social Studies teachers and the effectiveness of their instructional strategies in the classroom are therefore crucial in the effective implementation of a Social Studies programme.

## **2.8 Geographic Skills in Social Studies and the Skills of the Teacher**

Inyang-Abia (2004) posits that Social Studies is more than the memorisation of facts. It is a discipline in which learners learn to think, to make hypotheses, and to find answers. Social Studies should be activity based, learning requiring first-hand experiences, and learners needing to act, sing, build, dance, take field trips, and have hands-on activities. Geographic skills embedded in Social Studies provide some of the necessary tools and techniques for learners to perform these tasks. The skills are central to Geography's distinctive approach to understanding the Earth's physical and human patterns and processes. According to the New Zealand Curriculum Guides (Updated November 5, 2015), geographic skills include geographic resource interpretation skills, geographic resource construction skills, communication skills, social skills, and fieldwork skills. A teacher who teaches Geography needs to possess these skills.

Apart from these specific skills, a teacher who teaches the geography component located in Social Studies should encourage active learning. Active learning is based on constructivism, which emphasises that learners construct or build their own understanding or meaning. Learners replace (unlearn) or adapt their existing knowledge and understanding (based on their prior knowledge) with deeper and more skilled levels of understanding. In relation to this study, the most relevant aspect of this learning theory is Lev Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding. The teacher of Social Studies uses his or her expertise to guide the learners from what they can achieve independently to what the learners can achieve with the teacher's guidance.

The concept of scaffolding represents any kind of support for cognitive activity that is provided by an adult when the child and adult are performing a task together (Wood & Middleton, 1975). By scaffolding tasks, providing guidance and support that challenges the learner based on their current ability, and through providing rich feedback using assessment for learning, the teacher actively helps the learner to develop deeper levels of understanding. In Geography, for example, if learners do not have the skills to read a grid reference, the teacher might use scaffolding to incrementally improve their ability to do this. Teaching Geography poses many challenges since the subject has its own practical algorithms or procedures. Scaffolding learners' learning is a possible way of overcoming these challenges. It can be done by providing few strategies to help students solve tasks, such as modelling, use of visual aids, or by creating more specific learning activities to provide their learners with more support. In a Geography classroom, this can only be ably done by a competent and effectively trained teacher of Geography.

An effectively trained, informed, and skill-equipped Social Studies teacher is an asset to the effective implementation of the curriculum (Meziobi, Oyeoku & Ezegbe, 2012). The teacher who teaches the Geography component in Social Studies teacher should be conversant with the objectives, content and methodology of the curriculum. This knowledge will be the teacher's benchmark for instructional delivery in the classrooms. To achieve functional education, the learner needs to be exposed to practical tasks and provided with ample opportunities to think reflectively, scientifically, and creatively. Teacher training institutions should, therefore, constantly enrich, revise, and review their programmes to include contemporary education reforms as required. This step will ultimately enhance Social Studies teachers' quality for effective implementation of education in Junior Secondary Schools.

The quality of teacher awareness of the objectives of the curriculum is crucial in its effective implementation through Social Studies instruction. In addition, Social Studies is yet to be adequately taught to enhance creative skills in the learner. This is supported by Ukadike and Iyamu (2007), who claims that Social Studies teachers have not involved learners in active learning through the inquiry process; instead, they have relied on expository method of instruction which exalts passivity in the classroom. The nature of Geography cannot allow this method of teaching and learning. Achime (2004) condemned expository method of teaching Social Studies and supported the inquiry process which injects creative and scientific skills in

the learner. In fact, all teachers need a range of different strategies in their repertoire, to draw on as appropriate.

Kanno (2004) called on the Social Studies teachers' to be resourceful to parade modern ideas. The research results of his study revealed that ICTs were not used in teaching Social Studies; this limited the resource base of the teacher. In addition, the Social Studies teachers were not ICT-skilled but had expressed interest and motivation in being ICT-skilled (Obuh,2007). Research in Geography education has pointed to the fact that using visual elements in the teaching of Geography causes the learning of the geographical subject matter become more permanent and efficient (*the picture superiority effect*) (Malamed, 2019). While learning occurs at a rate of 10% with listening, this rate goes up to 80% when seeing is added. Pictures (both still and motion) are important, because it is more probable to remember such elements when compared with verbal information. Other visuals include graphs and diagrams, maps, and realia.

It is also known that using humour in teaching can enhance learning. Steele's (1998) study at Robert C. Byrd High School in West Virginia, USA, examined the effectiveness of humour on reducing learners' stress and tensions as well as the fostering of a positive environment in class. Her findings were that sixty-five percent of the learners perceived teacher who used humour in the classroom as approachable; one-half of the learners believed that the teacher/learner relationship was enhanced by a degree of humour in the classroom; and that when learners perceived a teacher as approachable, the teacher/learner relationship was enhanced. In addition to Steele's findings, it can also be claimed that using humour in a suitable and timely manner in educational processes brings many benefits and facilitates learning. Using humour in Social Studies education can affect teacher and learners in a positive manner. It moves the classes away from being monotonous and boring, and ensures a more entertaining learning medium. However, when applying humour in classroom environment, it is necessary that the main purpose is not ignored, and humour is used for the purpose of education, because the sole purpose of humour is not laughing and entertaining (Oruç, 2006: 6).

The geography content in Social Studies should be instructed from the simple to the complex, from tangible to abstract, from easy to difficult, consistent with learning principles, and contain actual information that is relevant to everyday life (Keser, 2004).

## **2.9 Review of Studies Related to this Study**

Mambwe et al. (2019) explored student teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about Inductive Teaching Learning Methods. The study was conducted in six primary colleges of education and target pre-service and in-service trainee teachers. Among other findings, the study found low self-efficacy beliefs among student teachers regarding inductive teaching methods. There was also no significant difference between pre-service and in-service student teachers' self-efficacy beliefs on the five selected inductive teaching methods. The study recommends that teacher training institutions should prepare student teachers in inductive methods if governments' policy shift from positivist-oriented teaching (teacher-centred) to constructivist-based teaching and learning is to be translated into practice in classrooms. Although this study did not focus on the challenges learners faced towards the implementation of the revised Social Studies curriculum at junior secondary, it gives insights on challenges trainee teachers of social studies faced during classroom practice that were useful to this study.

In another study by Mambwe (2019) focusing on social studies student teachers' views on the implementation of learner-centred teaching and learning approach in Zambian primary schools, it was revealed that the policy emphasis on using learner-centred approach in the teaching learning process has not really taken off in Zambian Primary Schools. Most student teachers reported that the traditional teacher led classrooms still dominate and characterised classroom practice in primary schools. A number of challenges ranging from low literacy levels, over enrolments (high number of pupils per class), inadequate time allocated per subject lesson per day, and lack of teaching and learning materials were cited for the non-implementation of learner-centred approaches. Thus, even though the teachers expressed positive attitude towards learner-centred approach the study concluded that the views of primary teachers did not inspire the realisation of the policy goal on learner-centred approach. School based programmes aimed at capacity building teachers on how to apply learner-centred methods in classroom situations with high numbers of pupils and low literacy levels that characterize low-resourced learning environments was recommended.

Meziobi et al. (2012) investigated Social Studies teachers' capability for effective implementation of the Universal Based Education (UBE) in Junior Secondary Schools in Orlu Education Zone of Imo State of Nigeria. The results from the study revealed that Social Studies teachers were not adequately aware of the objectives of UBE. In addition, teacher training institutions did not prepare Social Studies teachers sufficiently for the implementation of the

UBE programme. Furthermore, the results showed that their teaching did not produce appreciable creativity in the learner and teachers did not use information and communication technologies (ICT) in the discharge of instruction as they were not ICT skilled. Additionally, teachers were not sufficiently exposed in their training to reforms in education, specifically the UBE and that the teaching of Social Studies was not functional in injecting practical skills and vocational training in the learner, which is the basic objective of UBE. This study basically looked at the Nigerian set up and did not show the teachers challenges in relation to the Zambian situation. However, the study provides a lesson that teachers will effectively teach subject matter for which they are adequately prepared.

Mulemi (2011) established that Geography at secondary school was also observed to have included crosscutting issues that addressed Environmental Education. The inclusion of the field project component was yet another positive direction. It was further established that the new Zambian High School Geography curriculum was an objective type of curriculum, meaning that outcomes were predetermined which facilitated the learning of simple skills. However, when it came to the actual understanding of ideas, learners experienced difficulties, as the pre-specification of objectives revealed that learners were just mere recipients of information and that learning opportunities seemed to be limited. Arising from these findings, Mulemi suggested improvements to the curriculum, such as embarking on continuous assessment criteria and the need to conduct a countrywide evaluation of the effects of the new curriculum. The current study assessed the teaching of Junior Secondary Geography in Social Studies, which is a slight shift from Mulemi's focus on what was taught (content).

Mbulu (2015), in a study of lecturers' attitude towards team teaching in social, spiritual and moral education (SSME), focused on lecturers in Primary Colleges of Education (PCEs) in Zambia. The implementation of an integrated curriculum in the PCEs had led to a major shift from traditional solo teaching to team teaching. The results of the study showed that lecturers had mixed views on the integrated curriculum in that they said they had no problem with the curriculum and yet they also lamented that the same curriculum was challenging to the learners. The nature of team teaching across the curriculum was collaborative because a variety of behaviours such as communication, information sharing, coordination, cooperation, problem-solving and negotiation were displayed. Although the overall attitude towards team teaching was positive among lecturers, classroom team teaching had not firmly taken off across the study areas. Based on the foregoing findings, the study recommended that Ministry of

Education should provide the necessary materials and infrastructure to facilitate the use of different forms of team teaching which was one of the teaching methodologies and teaching strategies of the 21st century. This study did not show the challenges that learners faced during the implementation of the revised Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School. The current study will attempt to close this gap.

Lufungulo (2015), in her study titled *Primary School Teachers' Attitudes towards ICT integration in Social Studies*, focused on issues to do with the integration of ICTs in the teaching and learning of Social Studies in Zambia. The study found that the teachers' attitudes were responsible for the success or failure of a new innovation in education. Findings revealed that primary school teachers held positive views towards the integration of ICT in the teaching and learning of Social Studies. This was mainly attributed to the training they had undergone within School and Impact Network on the usage of ICTs. One of the recommendations made by the study was that scholars in the field of Social Studies should explore in detail benefits and challenges of incorporating ICTs in the subject area and also examine consequences of iPad and computer screens on the sight of teachers and learners. This study did not show the challenges learners faced towards the implementation of the revised Social Studies curriculum at junior secondary but gives insights that there could be challenges in the teaching of the geography component in Social Studies.

Samwimbila (2017) did a study on teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of the revised Social Studies curriculum in selected secondary schools in Mufumbwe District in Zambia's North-western Province. The objectives of the study were to investigate the views of teachers towards the implementation of the revised Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School; identify the benefits of implementing the revised Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School; explore the possible challenges of implementing the revised Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School; and to suggest effective ways of implementing the revised Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School. While the study explored the challenges of implementing the curriculum, it mainly concentrated on the attitudes of teachers and not of the learners. Furthermore, the study did not specifically consider the challenges teachers face to teach the geography component of Social Studies, which is the focus of the current study.

Hangoma (2020) investigated the challenges faced in teaching and learning of Social Studies in selected primary schools in Lusaka district. Some of the objectives of her study were

exploring the challenges faced in the teaching and learning of Social Studies and ascertaining the benefits of teaching and learning of Social Studies in primary schools. The study revealed many challenges faced in the teaching and learning of Social Studies. Those relevant to the current study include the multi-disciplinary and diverse in nature of the subject, limited training among teachers, and shortage of highly skilled human resource. Although lack of skilled teachers to teach the subject featured prominently on Hangoma's findings, the researcher did not make any recommendation about how to solve this problem. In addition, the focus of this study was on primary education, not Junior Secondary School which is the focus of the current study.

Simakando (2019) studied the teaching of Social Studies in schools in Kabwe District in the Central Province of Zambia. The researcher's interest was in the teaching of the History component in Social Studies. The study found that Social Studies was being implemented differently in different schools; in some schools, teachers were compelled to teach all the three components of Social Studies although they were trained to teach one or two components. In other schools, teachers taught the components according to their specialisation. Further, the study established that among the challenges faced in the implementation of Social Studies teaching was lack of qualified teachers and suggested that this could have contributed to poor performance in History at senior level. Simakando's recommendation was that, teachers given to teach Social Studies should be qualified. The study provided good insight into the problems that the teaching of Social Studies posed, although its focus was on the History component.

Another significant study on the implementation of Social Studies in Zambian schools was done by Pungwa (1982). Pungwa investigated the *receptivity of teachers* to the integrated Social Studies curriculum which replaced the single subject discipline curriculum in Zambian Junior Secondary Schools. He interviewed Geography, History, and Civics teachers from 50 schools in 7 of Zambia's 10 provinces. The open-ended questions were on the relevance and effectiveness of the old curriculum, the efficiency of the new programme, the possible need for teacher retraining and methods changes, and areas where the new curriculum could be improved. According to Pungwa, results for the study were generally favourable to the new curriculum, albeit with some reservations. Those opposed to the curriculum expressed concerns that individual disciplines would be watered down or possibly neglected, individual departments might lose identity, teachers might lose autonomy, and problems would develop in teacher training and materials development. The researcher's recommendations for

implementing a new curriculum included revision of teacher education objectives and teacher education programmes, and accelerated training of curriculum developers. Clearly, Pungwa's study has a lot of relevance to the current study, although its focus was much wider than the current study's focus on Geography only.

A study by Moobola and Mulenga (2020) sought to analyse the implementation of Social Studies in secondary schools in Chingola on Zambia's Copperbelt Province. Using a phenomenological research design, the researchers drew a sample of 71 participants comprising of 40 teachers of Social Studies, 20 learners of Social Studies, 10 secondary school head teachers and the District Education Standards Officer. Among the findings of the study was that time allocated to the implementation of Social Studies in schools was inadequate, and that Social Studies was being taught through specialisation by teachers who were trained in subject areas like Geography, History and Civic Education, a scenario which contributed to the poor performance of learners. The researchers' recommendations were that the Ministry of General Education should consider allocating more time (periods) to the implementation of Social Studies, expedite the training and recruitment of Social Studies teachers and encourage Continuous Professional Development (CPD) meetings both at district and school levels for the purpose of capacity building. Undoubtedly, this study made a huge contribution to the topic currently under study.

Another study in the area of Social Studies was done by Musilekwa and Mulenga (2019). This study concerned itself with the quality of Social Studies learners' textbooks for the Junior Secondary School which were developed following the revision of the Zambian school curriculum in 2013. The findings of this study revealed that the textbooks developed were of poor-quality, partly because secondary school teachers of Social Studies were not fully involved in developing learners' textbooks. Although the study's emphasis was on textbook production, the important lesson for the current study is that if Social Studies was going to be implemented successfully, there was need to involve competent Social Studies teachers.

## **2.10 Research Gap**

Many aspects of the Zambian Junior Secondary School Social Studies syllabus have been examined by different scholars, but very few studies have investigated the challenges and opportunities that teachers who teach Geography in Social Studies face. An accurate understanding of these challenges and opportunities is required in order to come up with

interventions that will enhance the teaching of Social Studies, particularly the geography component. Yet, literature shows that there is still inadequate information about the challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Social Studies in Zambia. There is, therefore, a need for more systematic, empirical research to assess the teaching of Junior Secondary Geography in Social Studies. The present study addresses this need to assess the teaching of Geography in Social Studies in Serenje district.

### **2.11 Summary**

This chapter covered the review of relevant literature. To do this, the researcher analysed past studies related to the area of inquiry, considering the subject from global, regional and local perspectives. In this chapter, the researcher reviewed studies that are relevant to the topic under investigation by discussing the meaning of Social Studies, the history of Social Studies, the performance of learners in Social Studies in Zambia, and the challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Social Studies. Literature has shown that the introduction of Social Studies in the school curriculum at junior secondary level in Zambia was a result of the interrelatedness of the content in Geography, History and Civics. The review has also shown that teaching Geography which is located in Social Studies may have both challenges and opportunities. The challenges may affect the teaching of Geographic knowledge, skills, and values. Finding out what these challenges were in the context of the Junior Secondary School course was the main focus of this study. The next chapter contains the methodology that was used in conducting this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Overview**

This chapter contains the research methodology that was used in the study. The chapter describes the research design, the study site, the target population, the sample, and the sampling techniques. The chapter also describes instruments that were used to collect data, the data collection procedures as well as the data analysis process and presentation. The chapter further describes how ethical issues were handled.

#### **3.2 Study Area**

The research was carried out in four secondary schools of Serenje district in the Central Province of Zambia. The schools were selected because they were implementing the revised Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School.

#### **3.3 Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative approach since its aim was to investigate the people's opinions about the challenges faced to teach Geography in Social Studies. According to Austin and Sutton (2014), qualitative research involves asking participants about their experiences of things that happen in their lives. This approach was suitable for this study because the researcher sought to find out the experiences that teachers and learners had when teaching or learning Geography in Social Studies. Further, the study used a descriptive design. Orodho, (2008) describes a descriptive survey as a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. For this study, this design was useful because it enabled the researcher to collect information about people's opinions about the challenges of teaching Social Studies in Zambian secondary schools and to describe the state of affairs as it existed (Orodho & Kombo, 2002). Kerlinger (1969) pointed out that descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings, but may often result in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solutions to significant problems. Thus, using the descriptive survey design in this study not only helped to investigate the challenges faced by teachers and learner in the new junior secondary Social Studies syllabus but also help to formulate solutions to the problem.

### **3.4 Target Population**

A population refers to the group of people a researcher wants to select participants of the study from, to enable him/her achieve the his/her objectives (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). In this study, the population consisted of all Social Science heads of Department, all the teachers, and all the learners selected junior secondary schools in Serenje district.

### **3.5 Sample Size**

A sample is a finite part of a population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Webster, 1985). Since it was not possible to study all the learners, teachers and heads of department, the sample for this study only consisted of teachers of Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level, learners doing Social Studies, and heads of the Social Sciences departments in the four selected secondary schools. The total sample for this study was thirty-six (36). This sample size was adequate for the purpose of a qualitative study where samples tend to be small in order to support the in-depth analysis (Sandelowski, 1996). The sample comprised four heads of the Social Sciences department (one from each selected school), sixteen teachers of Social Studies (four from each of the selected schools) and sixteen learners (four from each of the selected schools). This was done in order to have a fair representation because the schools selected did not go beyond four junior secondary classes. The participants were purposively selected as they were eloquent in providing the data needed by the researcher.

### **3.6 Sampling Procedure**

Sampling is the procedure a researcher uses to select people, places, events or things to study. It is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Orodho & Kombo, 2002). This study utilized both and purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select the province and the district. Since the researcher was domiciled in Serenje district in Central Province, it was convenient for him to undertake the study in that area. This means that the choice of the province and the district was not only based on the fact that they displayed the attributes that the researcher was looking for but also due to their proximity to the researcher. Within the district, purposive sampling was used because it enabled the researcher to choose participants considered to be knowledgeable and well informed about the subject under investigation (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Luborsky and Rubinstein (1995) assert that qualitative samples are purposive, that is, they are selected by virtue of their capacity

to provide richly-textured information, relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher believes that some subjects are more fit for the study than others and they are therefore purposively chosen.

The four secondary schools were selected purposively because they were implementing the revised Social Studies curriculum at Junior Secondary School. They, therefore, had an experience about the challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Social Studies. Similarly, the heads of social sciences departments were selected using purposive sampling because they had been coordinating the teaching of Social Studies in their schools and therefore understood the challenges and opportunities that this study was investigating.

The selection of teachers of Social Studies and learners was done purposively. For each school, the names of teachers who taught Social Studies were identified to be part of the sample. The learners were purposively selected from each class, depending on the school administration's judgement that they could provide answers adequately.

### **3.7 Research Instruments**

This study employed semi-structured interview guide, focus group discussion guide, lesson observation guide and document analysis guide as methods of data collection. To achieve this, semi-structured interview schedules were used as research instruments for interviews, focus group discussion guides were used for focus group discussions, and lesson observation schedules for lesson observation and check list for document analysis (Appendices 1 to 4).

#### **3.7.1 Semi-structured Interview Guide**

The semi-structured interview guide was used to collect data from Heads of Department and Social Studies teachers. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study because they offered a considerable amount of leeway to the researcher to probe the respondents while maintaining basic interview structure. This enabled the researcher to collect in-depth information in a systematic manner. The interviews were recorded using a voice recorder and that was augmented by notes that were taken by the researcher.

### **3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion Guide**

The study employed a focus group discussion guide with learners. FGDs were used to elicit learners' opinions on the challenges that they faced when learning Geography in Social Studies and the opportunities that were there for learning Geography properly. The learners were put into groups of four, according to the schools they came from. The discussions were recorded using an audio and tape recorder. The advantage that the study derived from this method was that the participants were able to learn from and influence each other and to elaborate their ideas based on the contributions of others.

### **3.7.3 Lesson Observation Guide**

For the purpose of triangulation, the researcher also observed some lessons in Social Studies. This was to ascertain the pedagogy employed in Social Studies to teach Geography. To achieve this, the researcher utilised a lesson observation guide to check mark the challenge that teachers faced when teaching Geography in Social Studies. This information was then compared with information obtained through interviews with teachers and focus group discussions with learners.

### **3.7.4 Document Analysis guide**

During the study, the researcher sourced for lesson plans from the schools where the research was carried out which related to the topic under study in order to compare with information that was obtained from primary sources. In other words, data obtained from documents tended to provide factual evidence or confirmation to support data interpretation. Other documents that were checked included the syllabus and schemes.

### **3.8 Pilot testing**

A pilot study was done to help the researcher identify ambiguous questions and clarify unclear statements. It also enabled the researcher to discover some deficiencies, such as wrong phrasing of the interview questions and insufficient spaces to write responses. For the purpose of this study, the research instruments were pre-tested to a selected sample that was similar to the actual sample that was used in the study. The researcher selected a school in Serenje district where the pilot study was done, following the same procedure as in the main study. The school that was used in pilot testing did not take part in the main study. The data collected during the pilot test were prepared, analysed and interpreted. The results were then used to help in

rectifying some misleading questions in the instruments before the main study was carried out, therefore, making the instruments valid and reliable.

As indicated earlier on, reliability was ensured through triangulation of research methods. This involved the use of interviews, focus group discussions, observation of lessons, and document analysis. Use of different methods helped to get and countercheck full information from the participants.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedure**

Before the beginning of data collection, the researcher first sought permission to visit secondary schools from the Ministry of General Education, through the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) for Serenje district. The researcher further notified the head teachers of the selected secondary schools about his intention to conduct a study in their schools. The researcher then made appointments with the respondents in the schools where the study was done, after informed consent. These arrangements were necessary to ensure respondents were found in their respective offices and schools on the day of the visit. On the agreed day or days, the researcher conducted interviews with the heads of department and the teachers, observed lessons, and held focus group discussions with learners.

### **3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Data were analysed using qualitative approaches, according to the research questions. Findings from interviews, focus group discussions and lesson observations were transcribed, coded and categorised according to themes which were compared and similar themes were grouped together. The final data were then presented in form of narrative reports or verbatim extracts.

### **3.11 Ethical Consideration**

Ethical considerations are an important aspect of any study in that they establish trust between the participants and the researcher. In this regard, the researcher sought permission from the relevant authorities including the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) and the head teachers of the selected schools (See Appendices 9 and 10). The researcher also sought permission from the participants so as to enable them participate fully, voluntarily and make sound decisions. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants well in advance and assured them of their rights to anonymity, confidentiality as well as dignity. A

written consent was sought (Appendix 11). The participants were given the right to understand what the researcher was doing. The researcher protected the schools and participants by not mentioning their names when presenting and discussing the findings but they were given codes instead, such as school A, school B, school C, and school D. It is important that social researchers get prior approval for their investigation from the ethics committee (Denscombe, 2003). Hence, ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Zambia Ethics Committee.

### **3.11.1 Researcher and Participant Relationship**

During the research, the researcher endeavoured to create a favourable atmosphere with the participants by according them maximum respect of their presence and the views which they contributed as they interacted through interviews.

### **3.11.2 Time and Validity of Research Design**

The time spent on each interview and validity of the research design was communicated to the participants before the commencement of the interaction with them. This also ensured the successful collection of the much-needed data without wasting both the researcher and participants' time. Thus, the participants were informed in advance of their right and reason to participate and withdraw from the study at any time if they decided to do so. In an effort to uphold the validity and reliability of the information, the researcher therefore ensured that multiple sources of information (triangulation) were used during the data collection process. This approach was of great essence because it tried to validate, corroborate and ascertain the truthfulness of certain statements from the different sources of data consulted.

### **3.11.3 Reciprocity**

In this study, the participants' views and contributions were highly appreciated and the researcher demonstrated this fact by thanking the participants for their cooperation at the end of the interaction. Some token of appreciation in form of talk time was given as a way of thanking the participants.

## **3.12 Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher has presented the methodology that was used for data collection and analysis and the reasons for which various decisions weretaken. The researcher used a qualitative research design with a purely descriptive approach. This entailed that the researcher

had to use sampling, data collection, and analysis procedures that were in tandem with that approach. Therefore, the sampling procedures used were largely convenience and purposive, while data collection used interviews, focus group discussions, observation and, document study. The data were analysed thematically and presented using verbatim extracts. Lastly, the chapter also dealt with issues of ethical considerations during the study, that there was trust between the participants and the researcher by ensuring anonymity, reciprocity, and also dignity for the participants.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Overview**

In this chapter, the researcher presents the findings of the study in line with the research questions, which were: (i) What challenges do learners face in the learning of the Geography component in Social Studies in selected secondary schools in Serenje district? (ii) What challenges hinder the smooth delivery of the geography lessons in Social Studies by teachers in selected secondary schools in Serenje district? and (iii) What opportunities are available for improving the teaching and learning of Geography in Social Studies in Zambian secondary schools?

#### **4.2 Challenges that Learners Face in Learning the Geography Component in Social Studies at Junior Secondary School Level**

The first research question sought to establish the challenges that learners faced in learning the Geography component in Social Studies. This was important to determine whether or not learners received adequate information for them to effectively acquire the knowledge and skills stipulated in the Social Studies curriculum. In order to collect data for this research question, interviews, lesson observations and document study were conducted and administered, accordingly. Pertaining to this research question, five major themes emerged, namely no permanent teachers for Social Studies, lack of teaching and learning materials, bulky Geography component, lack of interactive teaching methods, and lack of teacher confidence, competence and preparedness. The sections that follow present the findings in line with these themes.

##### **4.2.1 No Permanent Teachers of Social Studies**

The study revealed that some schools did not have a single trained teacher of Social Studies to teach all the components. This is in opposition to the government policy of having a teacher who can teach all the components of Social Studies. The study further revealed that Social Studies teachers spent more time on teaching their subjects of specialisation than on Geography. This meant that there was an element of bias in terms of input. Learners were able to notice teachers who were Geography-inclined from the mood of lessons. Furthermore, from discussions with learners at school A, it was discovered that there were no permanent teachers

of Social Studies. This meant that learners were handled by different teachers. The rotation of teachers, especially those who handled the Geography component, resulted in learners getting confused as teachers gave contradictory information about which areas to concentrate on. For example, one teacher told learners to ignore the map work as it didn't matter during examinations. A learner reported that:

*We don't have permanent teachers. Actually, we have had four teachers since grade 8. Sometimes we get confused because one teacher says this and another one tells us something completely different. It is so confusing.*

#### **4.2.2 Lack of Learning Materials**

When asked about the availability of text books, learners stated that they were not availed the text books because schools did not have them; only subject teachers had text books. At one school, learners were made to share the few available copies in groups. A learner stated that:

*Here, we are not given any textbooks. We only see these books with our class teachers when they come to teach.*

All the schools visited by the researcher mentioned a book called 'MK'. This meant that it was the widely used text book among the teachers and learners. Some learners had personal copies while others had old copies of specialised subjects like civics.

Another learner observed that:

*We need text books in order to explore for more information on a particular topic. This is because different books have different views on some topic and the extent at which a topic is understood varies from one book to another.*

At school B, the researcher observed a grade 8 lesson on *Zambia's Drainage*. During that lesson, the teacher asked learners to identify the sources of Zambia's main rivers. However, the teacher neither had a map nor an Atlas to refer to. The hand-held text book map which she used to show the drainage map of Zambia was too small for the learners to see clearly from a distance. The teacher should have bought, drawn, or even engaged learners to draw a reasonably bigger map for all the learners to see clearly.

Most heads of the Social Sciences department stated that schools had received copies of the syllabus and only a few text books for teachers only. This meant that learners were not

adequately catered for in terms of learning materials such as Atlases, wall maps and other related materials for the effective delivery of Geography lessons.

#### **4.2.3 Bulky Geography Component**

Most of the lessons observed were not concluded and the reason given was that most Geography lessons were bulky as compared to other components of Social Studies. It was also learnt that maps and diagrams consumed a lot of time and that sharing of periods with other components made the Geography component suffer a lot. This was confirmed by the number of uncompleted tasks at the end of the lessons; in most cases, learners were told to complete their tasks after the lessons. A head of department noted that,

*Geography has the problem that it's very bulky. It is difficult to finish all the parts of the subject area. This is not so with the other components of Social Studies, like Civics, which do not have maps and diagrams. When content is not finished, the learners are at a disadvantage.*

#### **4.2.4 Lack of Interactive Teaching and Learning Methods**

Many of the lessons observed showed that learners were subjected to question and answer as a method of learning, with very little learner interaction. In addition, teachers extracted notes from text books and made the learners to copy these notes in their note books. At school A, a teacher took a good number of minutes to draw a map of Zambia which learners later drew in their note books, as shown in Figure 2.



*Figure 2: Teacher drawing a map on the board for learners to copy*

*(Source; field image)*

In this case, an entire lesson was devoted to map drawing instead of doing other processes. In another instance, at school D, a lesson that was supposed to take 80 minutes only took 20 minutes as the teacher just told pupils to draw a map from a text book and that she was going to mark their books later.

Concerning outdoor learning activities, the study found that geographical field trips were rarely undertaken in all the schools the researcher visited. At school C, the researcher found a school bus loading learners who were scheduled for a field trip. The researcher inquired from the learners what the trip was all about. The respondents claimed that it was a yearly programme for historical tours only. This response indicated that the trips catered for the History component mostly. This meant that geographical trips were not given chance. At school C, another respondent stated that,

*The school administration organises trips every year to visit historical sites within the district but rarely do we visit places of geographical interest. Today, we are having a tour of Nachikufu Cave. Last year, the first privilege was given to the grade nines and this year it is the same.*

At school C, it is clear that there was a bias towards one area which attracted field trips annually. This deprived the Geography component of having field excursions. One pupil from school A had this to say:

*The school has a bus but there are no field trips that are conducted. We love travelling so much and we enjoy learning outside but our teacher likes teaching in class.*

In concluding the findings for this section, it can be said that some of the things that hindered the teaching and learning of Geography in the selected schools were frequent teacher turnover, lack of teaching and learning materials and lack of interactive teaching and learning. Learners grasp ideas in different ways and a variety of methods are needed to reduce the monotony in the way learners learn. For example, learners enjoy field trips more than classroom-based teaching and as such they get motivated when a teacher takes the learners out for an excursion.

#### **4.2.5 Lack of Teacher Confidence, Competence and Preparedness**

The study revealed that, in many cases, teachers lacked confidence, competence and preparedness. In one of the lessons observed, the teacher did not show that she was adequately prepared and competent to teach and seemed to be in a panic mode when she was called upon to teach. Although the lesson plan indicated that the teacher would use teaching and learning aids during the lesson, the only aid that she had was a text book. After the lesson, the teacher openly confessed to the researcher that:

*This topic gives me a headache, especially that I am not trained in Geography. How I wish someone could do it for me. I hope ‘tamumwenemo.’ [the researcher getting embarrassed by her poor performance].*

Furthermore, teachers lacked competence to teach as note-taking and map-drawing dominated the activities for the learners. Although the lesson plans showed many teaching and learning steps in the lesson development, these steps were not followed during the lessons. When the researcher checked the teachers’ lesson evaluations on the lesson plans, it was observed that most of the lesson plans indicated that the lessons were well taught (see Figure 3). However, from the researcher’s observation, most of the lesson plans were not correctly formulated in conformity with the outcomes. Even with these shortcomings, the lesson plans were approved by the HODs and the teachers went ahead and used them to administer lessons.

SUBJECT: geography (S.S).

CLASS: 10A2 DA2

DURATION: 40 minutes.

No. of pupils: \_\_\_\_\_

TOPIC: The Environment.

SUBTOPIC: The major drainage features of Zambia.

RATIONALE:

Learners will learn about the drainage features of Zambia. This will make learners of the water systems that are found in Zambia. Whole class discussion, question and answer will be the methods used. This is the 2nd lesson in the series.

LEARNING OUTCOMES - LWBAT

- Explain drainage.
- State the major rivers of Zambia.

PRE-REQUISITE KNOWLEDGE:

Learners are aware of the Zambezi river, the source and the areas it passes through.

TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Chart showing the Zambia relief levels.

REFERENCES

- syllabus.
- Social Studies book page 18-19.

# LESSON PROCESS

STAGE/TIME	TEACHER'S ACTIVITIES	PUPILS' ACTIVITIES	LEARNING POINTS
INTRODUCTION 5 minutes	Asks learners to state the source of the Zambezi river and the distance from the dam that has formed in Zambia on the Zambezi river.	Respond to questions	<del>Expected answers</del> <del>Kariba dam</del> - 3540 km - Kariba dam.
Development: Activity 1.	1. Asks learners to explain drainage. 2. Asks learners to state the major rivers of Zambia. 3. Explain further by using whole class discussion method. 4. Give class exercise to the learners Where is the source of the Kafue river? What is the name of the river that starts from the Malawi highlands?	explain.  Stating.  Respond to questions asked by the teacher.  Answer the exercise.	<u>Expected answers</u> - This is the water systems e.g rivers, lakes, Lakes.  <u>Expected answers</u> - Zambezi river - Kafue river - Luapwa river - Chambeshi river.

LESSON EVALUATION: of the river that starts from the Malawi highlands

Conclusion: Recap of the whole lesson through exercise  
 Evaluation: The lesson was taught successfully as they were able to state the major rivers of Zambia and explained clearly.

*Figure 3: An example of an inadequately prepared lesson plan.*

*(Source; field image)*

The lesson plan in Figure 3 shows that the teacher was not adequately prepared to deliver the lesson. To start with, the outcomes were not clearly stated while the outline of the lesson was not professionally done. Furthermore, the way the lesson was planned differed from how it was administered in class. Since lesson plans are a derivation from the syllabus, completely moving away from their stipulations undermines the intentions of what the nation aims to get out of the learners who will ultimately take up national leadership.

### **4.3 Factors that Hinder the Smooth Delivery of the Geography Lessons in Social Studies by Teachers**

Research question number two sought to establish the challenges teachers face in the delivery of Geography lessons with regards to the revised Social Studies curriculum. This question was important in that change of curriculum in schools should trigger change in teacher education programme in order to train relevant teachers and also equip the existing teachers with necessary knowledge and skills for the new syllabus. This section presents the findings.

#### **4.3.1 Negative Attitude by some Teachers towards the Geography Component**

One of the findings showed that some teachers with no Geography background had a negative attitude towards the Geography component of Social Studies. For example, all HODs acknowledged that Continuing Profession Development (CPD) meetings were conducted in the schools. However, HOD A had this to say:

*Let me state this clearly; teachers have a negative attitude towards this change and rarely implement what is discussed in the meetings. Some teachers have even opted to shift to the Religious Education section just to avoid such complications.*

The HOD further stated that ignoring CPDs was a retrogressive idea as it didn't help to uplift of standards in schools when changes arose.

Another HOD complained that:

*There are less workshops for Social Studies teachers compared to other subjects like Mathematics and natural sciences. The teachers normally don't*

*even update themselves with information. They just teach outdated information and take things exactly as they are from the syllabus.*

The reference point was that government put more emphasis on the promotion of Mathematics and Sciences and rarely did teachers see donors funding projects for social sciences. According to the teachers, the government's inclination towards natural science-based programmes made the social sciences to suffer in many ways.

#### **4.3.2 Lack of Teacher Monitoring**

When asked about monitoring of teachers to ensure that they were teaching properly, all the HODs claimed that they executed their duties diligently. However, HOD B openly stated that:

*The teaching culture by some of the staff is very pathetic; some teachers use 'remote' kind of teaching where they give out a text book to one of the pupils so that he or she can write notes for the class. The teacher, without any reason for doing so, might be seated, chatting in the staff room or going about their other businesses. We are advised by our superiors that one should not recommend such kind of a teacher for transfer but instead be able to discipline him or her. Some teachers hardly change.*

During the interviews, there was an overwhelming response from the HODs that monitoring was constantly done. However, a check on the lesson plans clearly showed that the task was not done expeditiously since most of the lesson plans inspected by the researcher were still not of good quality. With special reference to the lesson plan in figure 3, the outcomes were inadequate equally the teaching aid that was indicated was contrary what was shown in class and the topic.

It is noted that constant monitoring puts teachers on their tip toes and it enhances productivity. Naturally, humans perform with vigour when monitored and results are improved by so doing.

#### **4.3.3 Complex Nature of Geography**

Geography by nature is a practical subject and demands a lot of hands on activities and calculations. From the interaction the researcher had with teachers who had no background of training in teaching Geography, it came out that the Geography component was the most challenging and they failed to comprehend certain topics despite having CPD seminars within

their departments. Map work was the topic that gave most teachers headache as most of them confessed that they literally told learners not to attempt the map work section during examinations. One of the teachers had the following to say:

*Teaching topographic maps is a common problem at most secondary schools. It is very difficult to handle this section of the syllabus because some of us were not trained to teach Geography.*

The scientific nature of Geography demands that teachers are rational thinkers and do not rely merely on rote learning. A proactive mind is what Geography demands. Topics like weather and climate demand that a learner provides alternative solutions to some phenomenon. Population challenges require scientific as well as humanistic approaches. In this regard, therefore, it was difficult for teachers who were not trained to teach Geography to teach it.

#### **4.3.4 Lack of Teacher Competence**

During one of the lessons observed by the researcher, a teacher could not explain Geography concepts clearly to the learners and just read them off a text book. During this lesson, the teacher stated that:

*A tributary is a river that goes into a small river, like we can see here.*

At that particular moment, the teacher was holding a text book and pointing at the Kabompo River moving out of the Zambezi River. Although this was incorrect, none of the learners challenged the teacher or showed disapproval.

At School D, a teacher refused to be observed as she claimed that she was new and still studying the topics in Geography. She further indicated that the researcher could observe her teach other components of Social Studies, like Civic Education. However, the researcher declined this offer as his interest was specifically in the Geography component. This clearly showed that the Geography component was perhaps not receiving an ample share of attention in Junior Secondary Social Studies.

One pupil explained:

*Our madam just reads from the [text] book and rarely asks questions. If you ask some questions, she says I will get back to you later. But she never gets back.*

Another respondent had this to say:

*Aba Geography bamo ama teachers balameka; they don't want to share [knowledge and skills] so that we can equally benefit. So fimokubebafye abaice ati akubelengenifye. Ngafyakosa mu exam kufitoloka. [Meaning some teachers of geography are not willing to share knowledge and skills and encouraged others to tell learners to skip difficult parts in an examination].*

When teachers persistently fail to meet learner expectations, learners tend to lose confidence in such teachers and learning to learners stops making sense. Learners are not motivated and prefer to stay away from such lessons.

#### **4.3.5 Low Calibre of Learners**

Some of the teachers interviewed were also concerned about the calibre of learners. They indicated that some pupils' literacy levels were so low that writing essays posed a major challenge to them during examinations. One teacher from school C stated that:

*Sir, abaice bamukomboni kukosa pakufunda. it is a big challenge to teach learners who come from the compounds] because they even fail to understand simple English and this forces us to use vernacular most of the time for them to get the concepts. We are, therefore, subjected to even explaining concepts to the level of primary school in order to make them understand. We do this so that they understand that the examinations require that one writes essays.*

This challenge made the teaching of Social Studies difficult because teachers had to assume the role of a literacy teacher instead of concentrating on their core business of teaching Geography.

#### **4.4 Opportunities Available for Improvement in Teaching and Learning Geography in Social Studies**

Research question number 3 sought to establish ways of improving the teaching and learning of Geography in Social Studies. This section presents the findings of the study concerning this question.

#### 4.4.1 Reverting to the Old System

When asked about how best Geography could be taught, all the respondents indicated that reverting to the old system where subjects stood on their own was the correct thing to do. The respondents also thought it was not right for Geography to be taught by teachers who lacked both qualification and experience. HOD C had this to say:

*Yes, we welcome the idea but the government could have waited for the new teachers [qualified] to come and take up this task rather than forcing individuals to swallow bitter pills. Some teachers have strongly refused to take up such responsibilities. Some components of Geography require some scientific approach and some demand the skill of mathematics to handle them. Remember some up graded secondary schools like ours have no one trained in Geography that have been sent to these schools.*

Some participants who had reverted to the old system of using specialised teachers to teach each component indicated that the method had helped to improve results in the previous year's examination. They reported that:

*Please sir don't reveal our strategy to our standards officers because they are against our strategy. We have been told to maintain single Social Studies classes but after the poor results in the initial years, we switched onto our old ways of teaching particular components by specialised teachers and they are all happy and this is yielding positive results.*

This clearly shows that teachers were doing the wrong thing to correct a problem. Having realised that the results were bad after using the government's approved way of handling Social Studies, some schools resorted to the old system of teaching and it was yielding positive results. This could be an indicator that the change was rushed.

That trained teachers were needed to teach Geography was the general outcry of the participants. They felt that delaying the deployment of qualified teachers meant perpetuating the problem of Geography being taught by unqualified teachers. Therefore, many teachers advocated for reverting back to the old system where Geography, Civics and History were taught as stand-alone subjects.

#### **4.4.2 Holding More Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Meetings**

Another opportunity available for improvement in teaching Geography in Social Studies is by holding more CPDs. When asked about the alternative in the absence of trained staff, HOD C stated that:

*We do hold some Continuing Professional Development meetings in which we share [teaching] experiences and some colleagues attend meetings organised by district officials.*

Another participant from school C said:

*Teachers should by now have been experts in delivery of the new curriculum. In as far as the development and implementation of the revised curriculum is concerned, they are expected to quickly adapt by learning from colleagues. This is because the syllabus has been in existence for more than three years [now].*

#### **4.4.3 Recruitment of Social Studies Trained Teachers with a Geography background**

When asked on how best Geography lessons ought to be taught by teachers, some respondents claimed that the syllabus was too bulky and needed restructuring to accommodate all the topics. One respondent had this to say:

*Geography is not like these other components where you can just give notes and allow learners to study on their own. It is too involving and requires hands on like map reading. The nature of examination also is different from the previous one which is also bulky.*

The commonest response from teachers was that, before the new Social Studies teachers were recruited, there was need to allow teachers who had no Geography background have constant meetings with teachers who had the knowledge of Geography to share ideas in all the challenging topics. Doing so would benefit learners. Teachers with proper knowledge of the Geography component should develop the habit of sharing ideas with the rest to strengthen the pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). The other response given was that teachers with a Geography background and other combinations like Languages and Mathematics could come out to rescue the rest by offering themselves to uplift the standards of the Geography component rather than leaving the component to suffer when they could readily handle such.

This could be done by carefully selecting teachers with the knowledge of Geography and aligning them to Social Studies teaching.

#### **4.4.4 Supplying Required Teaching-Learning Materials**

When asked about the availability of reference books and teaching materials, one participant from school B had this to say:

*Teaching aids such as textbooks are very important for one's delivery of an effective lesson in class. But, at this school, there are very few books catering for all the learners. There is, therefore, need for schools to procure text books.*

A respondent from school D had this to say:

*We don't have text books for use at this school and when the teacher gives us homework, we have difficulties to search for information and, since our school is in a rural set up, we can't even find friends to ask from as it is far from other secondary schools.*

#### **4.4.5 Enhancing Interactive Teaching**

Interactive learning would present an opportunity for Geography to be taught appropriately in Social Studies. When asked if field trips took place in schools, a learner stated that:

*In this school, we see teachers using the bus to go and play football. Learners are not allowed to just go to see places like Kundalila Falls or Lukusashi Power Station.*

Learners seemed to know the advantages of interactive learning; they were, therefore, requesting for outings in form of geography field trips to go and have real life experience.

#### **4.4.6 Retraining of Teachers to Equip Them with Special Skills**

Another way to improve in teaching and learning of Geography in Social Studies is by making in-service training or capacity building available to teachers. When asked attended in-service training or capacity building programmes, teachers felt implementation was slower than they would have wanted.

*In-service training is difficult to undertake because school administrators do not want teachers to go on study leave. This could be because of shortage of*

*teaching staff but also because they [administrators] think sponsoring teachers is expensive.*

Another teacher stated:

*As teachers, we would like to upgrade. But where there is no sponsorship, one has to pay for herself, which is expensive.*

Without retraining, teachers still used the old methods of teaching where the teacher was the know-it-all instead of a facilitator. The idea of proceeding from the known to unknown using the ZPD was what the teachers encouraged.

#### **4.5 Summary**

This chapter presented the findings of the study on the challenges and opportunities presented by teaching and learning Geography as part of the Social Studies Junior Secondary School syllabus in Serenje district. Presented according to the research objectives, the main findings were that the delivery of Geography lessons was hectic since specialised teachers had not yet been deployed into schools by the government. As a result, the old [unqualified] teachers continued teaching Social Studies using the old pedagogy. The respondents, nevertheless, disclosed that the Geography component was unique and required a scientific and mathematical mind to teach certain topics, such as map reading and weather. Also, teachers who were trained to teach Geography were not always willing to share their knowledge and skills with those who were not trained. Invariably, the study revealed that some teachers were not using appropriate methods while others lacked the knowledge of Geography content. On the learner side, challenges faced in learning Geography included too much use of the lecture method and lack of materials such as text books, atlases, and wall maps. Some of the opportunities presented by teaching Geography in Social Studies suggested by the respondents were reverting to the old system, holding CPDs more frequently, recruiting properly trained teachers, providing necessary teaching-learning materials, and retraining (capacity building) of already serving teachers.

The next chapter, Chapter 6, discusses the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 Overview**

In the previous chapter, the findings for this study were presented. In this chapter, the findings will be discussed. The discussion will be done under the themes derived from the research questions and in the light of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter one. The three research questions were as follows:

- (a) What challenges do learners face in the learning of the Geography component in Social Studies in selected secondary schools in Serenje district?
- (b) What challenges do teachers face in the smooth delivery of the geography lessons in Social Studies by teachers in selected secondary schools in Serenje district?
- (c) What opportunities are available for improving the teaching and learning of Geography in Social Studies in Zambian secondary schools?

#### **5.2 Challenges Learners Face in Learning the Geography Component in Social Studies at Junior Secondary School Level**

The first research questions ought to establish the challenges that learners faced when learning the Geography component in Social Studies. This was important to determine whether learners received adequate instruction for them to effectively acquire the knowledge and skills stipulated in the revised curriculum. To collect data for this research question, interviews, lesson observations, and document study were conducted and administered accordingly. The next section discusses the findings to this question.

##### **5.2.1 No Permanent Teachers of Social Studies**

The study established that schools did not have specific teachers who were trained to teach all the components of Social Studies. Those teaching Social Studies, therefore, tended to concentrate more on their subject of specialisation than the components in which they were not trained. The implication of this is that the Geography component suffered when Social Studies was taught by teachers trained in History and Civics. The rotation of teachers, especially in the handling of the Geography component, resulted in failure to prepare learners adequately for their Junior Secondary School examinations. For example, some teachers told learners to

ignore the map work section of the examinations just because they failed to teach map work. It can be argued that the success of any educational system partly relies on the calibre of the teacher because teachers are at the frontline of programme implementation. Kelly (2009) argues that, because teachers are central to what happens in the classrooms, they can ‘make or break’ curriculum policy. How teachers view their subject is crucial to understanding what happens in classrooms. It is for this reason that Zambia’s education policy, *Educating Our Future*, attaches great importance to the training of quality teachers for the attainment of quality education (MoE, 1996). This means that the implementation of the revised curriculum in secondary schools first required training of teachers in teaching methodologies of the new subjects. UNESCO(2002) states that “one of the practical implications of developing any curriculum is to presume that, at the local level, competent staff will be available to carry out the tasks. . .” The implication of this situation, therefore, is that before MoE and other stakeholders embarked on the implementation of the revised curriculum, there was need to question the abilities of individuals at the frontline to have the capacity to internalise change and enact the reform handed down from the higher levels of government. Douglass (n.d.) states that one reason why geographic instruction appears to be so ineffective may be that teachers generally are not themselves geographically literate. According to Douglass, one teaches what one knows, and, therefore, if a teacher is not trained to teach Geography, it would be difficult for him/her to be effective in teaching geographic concepts. The assertion again shows that Geography can only be ably taught by professional geographers, not people who have studied other fields. The assertion is also in line with social constructivist theory that the more knowledgeable adult or teacher provides assistance to the less knowledgeable learners (Omojuwa, 2005). This implies that, for a teacher to adequately help his/her learners, he/she needs to acquire more knowledge in the subject area.

A robust and responsive teacher training programme needs to make teachers more knowledgeable and skilful in their areas of specialisation. It should be one where teachers are adequately equipped with new or revised knowledge about the curriculum or policy reform for onward transition to the learners. This clearly indicates that the role of an effective teacher is to design learning environments that can provoke the kinds of thoughtful engagement that help learners develop effective thinking skills and attitudes that contribute to effective problem-solving and critical thinking. Research results have shown that when children are assisted by a knowledgeable adult, they perform better at the task than children who worked independently. From a Vygotskian perspective, the teacher's role is mediating the child's learning activity as

they share knowledge through social interaction'(Dixon-Krauss, 1996, p. 18). The duty of a teacher is simply to facilitate learning and the rest follows. This can only be done if a teacher provides conditions necessary for learners to freely interact with others and nature. Gill (2013) preferred a teaching style which is engaging aimed at developing critical thinking skills. Teaching is meant to build confidence and freedom in a learner to freely solve personal and societal problems. The teaching of social studies does not only aim at teaching for examination but also to allow learners to provide solutions to challenges. Thanh (2010) stressed that learner-centeredness of teaching and learning approach allows student independence and activeness. The archaic and authoritative approach of lecturing to learners is long gone as it intimidates learners and they get deprived of taking part in learning. However, the independence is monitored by the teacher who stipulates the boundaries of such a learner.

### **5.2.2 Lack of Teaching and Learning Materials**

Findings revealed that the revised Social Studies curriculum lacked materials to be used in teaching of the subject. It was observed that when the curriculum was rolled out in schools, materials to go with the revised curriculum were not in place. This made the teaching of the subject very difficult as teachers were unable to teach effectively. Provision of quality teaching and learning materials and equipment was inadequately and inappropriately done. According to Chileshe (2018), for a teaching and learning programme to succeed, it must be guided by sound methodology, availability of teaching and learning materials, and a sound assessment procedure. Therefore, the absence of teaching and learning materials in the selected secondary schools constituted a hinderance to effective teaching and learning of Geography. During this study, in all the schools the researcher visited, it was observed that learning materials related to the teaching and learning of Geography were not adequate. Lack of reference books limits the learners' capacity of exploring for more evidence on specific topics. Pelech and Pieper (2010) pointed out that, in a situation where most of the teachers do not have teaching aids, especially textbooks, it becomes a problem for learners to understand the lesson. Furthermore, outdated text books may be of little use to learners. As postulated by Goodson (1987), Geography is very dynamic and requires dynamic minds to obtain information, hence the need to search for updated data. Atlases are among the books that require constant updating in the fast-changing world.

Teachers of Geography also need to be resourceful. The case in point is the situation at school B where a teacher depended on a small text book map to teach the sources of Zambia's main rivers. Had the teacher been resourceful, she would have drawn a bigger map or engaged learners to draw a reasonably big map for everyone to see. Asiegbu and Okpala (2019) noted that teacher resourcefulness is key to improving the use of instructional materials in teaching and learning. The duo state that, without resourceful teachers, we can never expect much from the educational system. Among other things, teacher resourcefulness includes ability to adapt to make the best use of available materials for maximal results. It is, therefore, expected that teachers could create reasonable teaching and learning materials to help them teach the Geography component in Social Studies effectively.

Most heads of Social Sciences departments stated that schools had received copies of the syllabus and a few text books for teachers only. This meant that learners were not adequately catered for in terms of learning materials, such as atlases, wall maps and related materials for the effective delivery of Geography lessons.

### **5.2.3 Complex Nature of Geography**

From the interaction the researcher had with teachers who had no background of training in Geography teaching, it came out that the Geography component was the most challenging. Some teachers without training failed to comprehend certain topics despite having seminars within the department. Map work was the topic that most teachers found difficult to teach. The nature of Geography as a modern subject is complex. For example, Geography has topics like weather and climate which demand that a learner provides alternative solutions to some phenomena and population studies which require scientific as well as humanistic approaches. Therefore, a teacher of Geography should be able to teach learners reading, critical thinking, and research skills, not mere memorisation. The subject requires teachers who are rational thinkers and do not rely on rote learning. A proactive mind is what Geography demands. But this takes time and hard work on both the learners' and teachers' parts.

The study also found that Geography was unpopular due to its voluminous nature. Therefore, Geography may not be a difficult but time-consuming subject. Awasthi (2021) asserts the scope of Geography as a subject is wider than many other subjects. The teacher has to deal with a 'heap' of factual information that he/she has to dispense and complete during the course of the year. In addition to this, Geography also demands a regular use of instructional resources and

more reference books and materials than other subjects. All these intricacies may require that the Geography component is taught by a teacher trained in Geography teaching.

Furthermore, the participants agreed that those teaching map work, globes and charts required a certain level of mastery; without mastery it would be difficult to teach these aspects of Geography. This finding is supported by Gokce (2014), who emphasised that map reading and use of the globe are necessary skills that learners must learn and develop in order to acquire the necessary geography skills. The result could mean that there are still limitations on the teachers' technical knowhow on the usage of maps, globe and charts in teaching Geography.

The research further observed that the failure to complete tasks meant that Geography lessons were usually incomplete. The implication of this is that the lessons did not meet the objectives and rationale for each lesson. Ultimately, the Geography syllabus was not completed. A syllabus serves as the contract between the learners and the teachers that contains functions and ideas that are used for the assessment of the learners' performance. Without satisfactorily completing the syllabus, learner performance in the examinations become poor. Yet, Zambia's aspiration is to provide learners with twelve years of quality primary and secondary education. This is also the aspiration of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal No. 4.1.

#### **5.2.4 Lack of Interactive Teaching Methods**

This study revealed that learners were subjected to question and answer as a method of learning. There was very little teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction. In addition, teachers extracted notes from the text books which they made learners to copy in their note books. This finding is in tandem with Kiboss's (2002) assertion that the expository approach is the most dominant teaching method used for instruction in schools. The expository approach, according to him, is instruction in which the teacher stands most of the time giving verbal explanations in the form of talk-and-chalk while the learners listen and write notes from the chalkboard. This approach may be described as archaic; while learners will always need teachers to explain complex and complicated information and to give examples to connect new information to learners' backgrounds, depending solely on the lecture method may not be acceptable. Modern thinking is that learners learn best when they are fully involved in learning than when they are at the receiving end all the time. According to Vygotsky (1978), the first level at which learning takes place is through interaction with others (that is, inter psychological level) before the learner integrates the learned material into his/her mental structure or schema (intra

psychological level). For learning to take place, learners must be paying attention and actively engaging their brains to process new sensory input. As explained by Doyle (2008), there is no such thing as passive learning. To optimise learning among learners, teachers must make careful decisions in determining when learners need to listen and when they need to figure out things on their own. A learner-centred practice should create learning environments that optimise learners' opportunities to pay attention and actively engage in authentic, meaningful, and useful learning.

Furthermore, findings regarding involvement in outdoor learning activities revealed that geographical field trips were rarely undertaken in all the schools the researcher visited. Doyle (2008) provides three clear rationales for learner-centred teaching through field work: changes in our understandings of how humans learn, preparing learners for their careers, and preparing learners to be lifelong learning. It is essential, therefore, that teachers who teach the Geography component of social Studies have an understanding of how to teach through field work.

The finding clearly shows that, while the MoE had put in place a revised curriculum which stipulates new methods and techniques to use to teach Social Studies, the people directly involved in teaching were either not conversant or inadequately equipped to employ those methods.

### **5.2.5 Lack of Teacher Confidence, Competence and Preparedness**

Readiness for an innovation plays a significant role in the implantation of any innovation or strategy. Walinga (2008) stated that in order for teachers to implement the curriculum successfully, they have to be ready for change to avoid resistance. However, unpreparedness and resistance were shown in this study by the way some teachers responded about the revised curriculum. The teachers indicated that they needed more time to learn and adjust to the revised curriculum before it could actually be implemented.

The participants' responses were, however, true because all teachers, whether experienced or inexperienced, have to understand a new curriculum as it is a complex process that has many implications. The fact that teachers seemed to panic when called upon to teach showed that they were not confident and adequately prepared to teach. According to Manchishi and Banda (2015), teacher education plays an important role in equipping prospective teachers to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider community. Therefore, a teacher trained to teach Social Studies should be able to handle the subject more competently than the

one who is not. Lesson planning and execution also revealed teacher incompetence. For example, a teacher spent less than twenty minutes explaining and then told learners to write notes from a text book for the rest for a 40-minute lesson. The other part was that a teacher indicates relevant steps in the lesson plan but fails to follow them. Not executing a lesson as planned is at variance with Vygotsky' theory which stipulates that the teacher should take centre stage in facilitating learning. A problem arises if the teacher does not have knowledge of the subject matter and does not get actively involved in spearheading the process of learning. Teacher preparedness is vital as it becomes the cornerstone in lesson delivery. A car cannot move unless the driver puts it into motion. On their own learners may not know the direction unless the teacher leads the way. It is for this reason that for learning to take place, it requires a competent teacher.

### **5.3 Factors that Hinder the Smooth Delivery of Geography Lessons in Social Studies**

This research question aimed at establishing the factors that hindered effective delivery of Geography lessons in Social Studies. The question was important in that change of curriculum should have in mind the various challenges that affect smooth implementation of the syllabus. It should also trigger change in teacher education in order to train relevant teachers and also reequip existing teachers with necessary knowledge and skills for the new syllabus.

#### **5.3.1 Negative Attitude by some Teachers towards the Geography Component**

An attitude has been defined as a tendency to react positively or negatively towards a certain object, be it a person, idea or situation (Nel *et al*, 2011). Attitude is very important when someone is a teacher. It affects learners in many ways and can shape their learning experience. The findings of this study revealed a lot of negative attitudes by teachers towards the teaching of Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level. Many of them did not welcome the manner in which the Social Studies syllabus was being implemented, particularly the idea of single handling of the subject, which made them teach the Geography component. Other teachers felt that the introduction of Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level was a great mistake, as it left both learner and teacher confused.

Although Continuing and Professional Development (CPD) meetings were conducted to help teachers, some HODs stated that teachers still had a negative attitude towards the change and rarely implemented what was discussed in the meetings. Some teachers had even opted to shift to other sections in the department just to avoid complications. Other teachers completely

ignored CPD meetings, a tendency that can be described as retrogressive since it doesn't help to uplift standards in schools when changes arise. CPD is a form of in-service training which can be organised for a short period and often within the location of school (Konstatinos, 2015). As observed by Fullan (1993), the period of time for CPD depends on the type of training. Most teachers were of the view that the government put much emphasis on the promotion of Mathematics and Sciences and rarely did they see donors funding projects for social sciences. According to Turner (2020), teachers continue to ask why social studies content is being pushed aside for language arts, mathematics, and other STEM-based curricula. The government's inclination to science-based programmes makes the social sciences to suffer in so many ways. Here, the logic is that even social sciences contribute to the fulfilment of a school certificate.

If teachers' cognition is addressed by supplying them with well-planned information about Social Studies, it could influence their motivation which could ultimately change their attitudes. Fullan and Pomfret (1977) posited that effective implementation of curriculum requires time, personal interaction, in-service training and other forms of support. Similarly, Talmor, Reiter and Feigin (2005) stated that studies have shown that there is a correlation between positive attitudes of teachers to the mainstreaming of a new need in the curriculum and the support that they receive from management, as well as other more technical variables. These variables include having more resources, smaller classes, more time available to design special teaching materials, and opportunities for personal development gained from further learning. Fullan (1993) had also suggested that effective curriculum change and implementation requires time, personal interaction and in-service training if implementers are to acquire necessary knowledge, skills and values. Therefore, implementation of Social Studies should have considered all these facets for the programme to succeed.

### **5.3.2 Lack of Teacher Monitoring**

Monitoring is an activity that involves continuous and systematic checking and observing of a programme or a project (Ndungu, Gathu & Bonnett, 2015). Constant monitoring puts teachers on their tip toes and it enhances productivity. Naturally humans perform with vigour when visited by monitors and results are improved by so doing. The findings of this study showed that the teaching culture of some teachers was very pathetic; they used 'remote' kind of teaching where they gave a text book to one of the pupils so that he or she could write notes for their class. Such teachers, without any reason for doing so, might be seated, chatting in the staff room or going about doing their businesses. A check on teachers' lesson plans clearly

showed that most of them did not do their work expeditiously. During interviews, there was an overwhelming response from HODs that there was need for constant monitoring of teachers. There were also concerns that there was poor monitoring by the Ministry of Education standard officers on the implementation of the revised curriculum.

Clearly, there is a general need for improving monitoring to ensure that quality education is taking place in schools, and also in individual subject areas, such as Social Studies. Monitoring of teacher performance and classroom practice is a common praxis worldwide as it increases instructional quality (Reddy & Dudek, 2014). It promotes maximal learner learning and the improvement of teacher practice through identifying strengths and growth areas.

### **5.3.3 Complex Nature of Geography**

From the interaction the researcher had with teachers without a background of Geography, it came out that the Geography component of Social Studies was very challenging and teachers failed to comprehend certain topics despite having seminars within the department. The teachers agreed that mastery of how to use maps, globes and charts was a difficult aspect of teaching Geography lessons. This result could mean that there were still limitations on the teachers' technical knowhow on the usage of map, globe and charts in teaching Geography. According to Gokce (2014), map reading and use of the globe are necessary skills that learners must learn and develop. Map work was the topic that gave most of the teachers a headache and they confessed that they literally told learners to just park the topographical maps aside during examinations. This meant that learners were advised to skip the map reading section of the examinations. The scientific nature of Geography demands that teachers are rational thinkers who do not rely on rote learning. A proactive mind is what Geography demands. Topics like weather and climate demand that a learner provides alternative solutions to some phenomenon. Population challenges require scientific as well as humanistic approaches. The respondents agreed that the Geography course has too much detail and somewhat difficult for the learners to comprehend and the teachers have to be updated in all geographic features and figures all the time. These contents aspect of Geography made the discipline difficulty to teach. Here, the respondents are aware of the need to be more informed and/or to have a wider background of Geographic concepts, facts, figures and structures.

The teachers agreed that time limitation in the search for Geographic information; there being many issues, topics, lessons based on memorization; and have a lot of foreign terms and

definition to be considered, were other unpopular aspects of the contents of Geography which made it difficult to teach. Geography lessons are not limited to recall or just cognitive level of knowledge. According to Aydin (2011) teaching and learning of geography needs to be able to answer the what, the where and how questions too. Teaching of Geography is towards assisting learners to develop higher order thinking and reflection.

#### **5.3.4 Low Calibre of Learners**

From three out of the four schools visited, teachers expressed concern about the low calibre of learners at Junior Secondary School. Some teachers complained that learners' literacy levels were so low that writing essays posed a major challenge during examinations. Most of these sentiments came from non-boarding schools since their catchment areas were learners drawn from nearby compounds and villages which had low literacy levels. Further to this, teachers also attributed the low calibre of learners to the automatic qualification of learners from grade seven to Junior Secondary School. Without grading the capabilities of learners who proceed to grade 8, low calibre learners also find themselves doing Junior Secondary School. This makes teaching geography at that level difficult. Allowing learners to progress automatically from one level to the next without understanding what they have learnt at a lower-level leads to the production of less knowledgeable learners. Additionally, examinations have a tendency to raise a learner full of confidence and a strong personality.

The finding of the study also shows that the type of school and the geographical location of the school has an influence on the performance of learners. This result supports findings of the National Assessment Survey (MoE, 2008) that performance of learners in urban schools were higher than those in rural areas of Zambia. Similarly, Ramous et al. (2012) also found that learners from rural areas performed lower than those in urban areas. Ramous et al. (2012) attributed poor academic performance of learners in rural areas to low socio-economic conditions in these areas. This study makes the same claim that socio-economic conditions of learners are responsible for the rural-urban disparity. Some learners used the local language to answer questions while their teachers also struggled to explain certain concepts. This really put teachers in an awkward position as they assumed the role of literacy teachers instead of concentrating on their core business of teaching geography.

## **5.4 Opportunities Available for Improving the Teaching and Learning of Geography in Social Studies**

Research question number three sought to establish ways of improving the teaching and learning of Geography in Social Studies. This question was important in that a pedagogical shift in how subjects are taught triggers change in mindset for the teachers in order to embrace new developments. A strategy on how to manage changes and switch on to new order of doing things demands a new twist.

### **5.4.1 Reverting to the Old System**

Curriculum implementation is a well-researched subject that requires the collaborative efforts of all educational stakeholders to ensure its effectiveness. In this regard, implementation is actualised when there is effective translation of policies into practice and this requires a proper consultative process. Allan et al.(1998) note that the successful implementation of a curriculum to a large extent is determined by knowledgeable teachers who are quicker to learn, accept change and read to think in the new direction. The results of this study showed that the knowledgeable teacher was missing in the schools that were studied. As a result, all the respondents advocated for reverting to the old system where subjects stood on their own. They did not favour the idea of allowing unqualified teachers to handle Geography topics without having any training or enough experience. This was supported by some HODs who stated that the move was hastily done and was not supported by teachers in schools. They further revealed that some teachers objected to taking up the responsibility of teaching Social Studies. The problem was compounded by the fact that a lot of schools were upgraded without trained teachers of Geography.

The participants were of the view that the biggest mistake the government made was to allow the implementation of the programme without adequate preparations with regards to staffing. This was observed in all the schools visited as no teacher was deployed to teach Social Studies specifically. If this process is delayed, the problems stated above will keep on recurring and in the near future learners will completely hate the Geography component of Social Studies.

### **5.4.2 Holding More Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Meetings**

In general, teachers are expected to implement the syllabus based on skills and knowledge they gained during either their initial teacher-training phase and/or during continued in-service teacher training programmes. The findings of this study revealed that the type of in-house

training the teachers received varied from departmental meetings, CPDs, to briefings. However, some participants complained of short period of time for their training but this is in line with the requirements of the type of training they attended. Despite these types of meetings some teachers continued teaching the subject using the old style thereby going against the government's policy of handling the subject single handed. CPD is a form of an in-service training which can be organised for a short period and often within the location of school (Konstatinos, 2015). This clearly shows that teachers are doing the wrong thing to correct wrong. Having realised that the results were bad after using the government's approved way of handling social studies, some schools still resorted to the old system and it yielded positive results. This could be an indicator that the exercise was rushed. This seemed to be an experimental programme as schools went their own way to ensure the programme succeeded. This was exhibited by the poor results displayed by ECZ in the first years of its implementation. It is for this reason that the government revisits the curriculum whilst putting things in place to suit the situation. Yoking teachers and forcing them to teach what they don't know yields raw products that fail to fit in senior secondary.

#### **5.4.3 Recruitment of Properly Trained Teachers**

The teachers' qualifications are necessary to ensure competence and quality in the teaching of the subject areas of their specialization. The common response from the teachers was that before the new social studies teachers were recruited, there was need to allow teachers have constant meetings with teachers who have the geography knowledge to share ideas in all the challenging topics. By so doing this would benefit learners. Teachers with proper knowledge of the Geography component should develop the habit of sharing with the rest to strengthen the pedagogical content knowledge (PKC). The other response given was that some teachers with Geography and other combinations like Languages and Mathematics come out to rescue the rest by offering themselves to uplift the standards of the Geography component rather than leaving the component to suffer when they can readily handle such. This can be done by carefully selecting teachers with the geography component and aligning them to Social Studies teaching. It is also important that teachers are accorded opportunity to commit to the innovation in their own time frame as forcing them may cause teachers to be resistance to change. Therefore, in terms of the input and process stages, the findings revealed that teachers were not fully prepared towards the implementation of the revised curriculum hence the likelihood that it may be difficult to fully realize its intended purpose and unless some measures were

devised to prevent it from failure, it may be difficult to state that the revised curriculum is effective. Although results showed that all the teachers indicated that they were trained and qualified teachers in their specific subject areas, findings, on the other hand, showed that they found it difficult to teach new subjects such as social studies.

The study however, revealed that some teachers lacked training and resources to equip them in handling the new subjects, a situation which may impede the effective implementation of the revised 2013 curriculum and the provision of quality education. Bunch (1997) pointed out that the MoE should ensure that in-service training was conducted to teachers and capacity building was done to the rest. This meant that the implementation of revised curriculum in secondary schools first required all teacher training institutions to train teachers on the teaching methodologies of new subjects before it could come to the actual implementation.

#### **5.4.4 Supplying Required Teaching Materials**

The other factor affecting teacher' effective delivery of Geography lessons was the non availability of teaching and learning materials. Teachers who taught in schools where there were adequate teaching and learning materials performed better in the subject, and those that taught at a school where there were inadequate teaching and learning materials exhibited lower delivery standards in the subject. This finding is also backed by findings of a study done by Luangala and Mulenga (2011) who established that the quality of teaching in any education institution is mainly measured by the availability of teaching and learning materials. Their study found that most of the schools surveyed had inadequate or no teaching and learning materials at all. Furthermore, the *Curriculum Framework* (MESVTEE, 2013) has also explained that provision of relevant teaching and learning material resulted in having motivated school teachers and quality education. Motivated Social studies teachers would in turn improve the teaching and learning of the subject. The text books were important in implementation of the revised curriculum in secondary schools. However, all of the teachers interviewed responded that relevant text books containing the curriculum content needed to be availed.

#### **5.4.5 Enhancing Interactive Teaching**

The study showed that three quarters of the learners indicated that they needed outings in form of Geography field trips to go and have real life experience and that, that was the reason school buses were purchased. They indicated that even simple outings to a nearby weather station or farm would be helpful. Field work motivates learners as it allows learners to interact with real

life situations and objects, thereby making learning more meaningful. Serenje is a rural district with a lot of educational sites like waterfalls, farms, historical sites, forests and many other areas that can allow learners have hands on type of learning. Learners remember more when they have an experience of a sort in whatever area. A teacher who takes out learners for field excursions will never have dull moments. This is consonant with Inyang-Abia (2004) who claims that Social Studies is more than the memorisation of facts; a teacher of geography needs to integrate his lessons through such strategies and learners will always remember the concepts taught in such arrangements. According to the New Zealand Curriculum Guides (Updated November 5, 2015), geographic skills include geographic resource interpretation skills, geographic resource construction skills, communication skills, social skills, and fieldwork skills. A teacher who teaches Geography needs to possess these skills. Modern teaching requires that the teacher uses strategies that equip learners with ideas and knowledge to help them cope with the life in the society after they leave a classroom. Geography without fieldwork cannot be called Geography because learners have to be involved in observation, recording, interpretation, map reading and the use of information in solving problems (Golightly, 2018). Whereas historians report their findings primarily through written narratives, geographers present their data primarily through the construction of ideas as they interact with the environment.

#### **5.4.6 Retraining of Teachers to Equip Them with Special Skills**

From the research findings, it was concluded that most of the teachers who were handling the Geography component in Social Studies were not trained in the subject. However, even the ones who were trained before needed retraining. As noted by Goodson (1987, p.64),

*Subjects are not monolithic entities, but shifting amalgamations of subgroups and traditions that through contestation and compromise influence the direction of change.*

The implication of Goodson's statement is that how Geography has been understood changes over time. This is also the thinking of Lambert and Morgan (2010) that Geography, like all dynamic areas of disciplinary thought, is in a constant state of becoming a discipline. It involves creating concepts in response to the changing world. It is for this reason that both old and new teachers need to blend their skills in order to embrace new ideas. For example, in methodology, the emphasis is continually shifting to involving learners in constructing their own knowledge through scaffolding rather than the teacher being at the centre of teaching and learning. Shifts

like this one call for the government to come up with a deliberate policy to retrain teachers to ensure that teaching is enhanced. Allowing the Geography component to be taught like Civics or History may jeopardise the whole essence of teaching Geography as a science which requires an inquiry approach. Topics like map reading require a teacher who has special skills to enable learners have hands-on learning and also interpret certain phenomenon with regards to map reading.

During the study, it was discovered that teachers did not collaborate much in sharing such knowledge. The implementation of the syllabus was very slow as teachers still used the old skills of teaching where the teacher was a bulldozer in class instead of the facilitator. The idea of proceeding from known to unknown using the zone of proximal development is the way to go. According to the MoE (2013), the general outcomes in the teaching of basic mapping techniques is to develop map reading and interpretation skills in order to apply them in everyday life and also for further studies. It should be realised that, a variety of teaching methods increases learner attention and interest and it also helps the teacher to manage the class well (Petty, 2009). It is not straight forward to say which one is the most effective way to teach Geography. In most cases, a combination of different teaching strategies on any topic generally may lead to good teaching outcomes. This is because, in the classroom, there are pupils with different capabilities in that there are those who are fast learners and also slow learners.

### **5.5 Application of Social Cultural Theory to the Study**

The study was underpinned by social cultural theory of teaching and learning, as espoused by Vygotsky (1978). He placed much emphasis on the role of the teacher in the educative process, in particular the zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding, as central to instructional enhancement and classroom change in learning. In this theory a teacher is just a facilitator in knowledge acquisition and learners just build up from the known to complex material thereby advancing in the learning process. Having used this theory to guide the current investigation, the researcher is of the view that the theory could work towards addressing the strategies that teachers use in teaching the Geography component in Social Studies and also appropriate use of teaching-learning strategies in various secondary schools of Zambia. The Zambian educational system at all levels encourages a learner-centred approach in the teaching and learning process (MoE, 2013). However, the findings of this study have shown that a lot of teachers do not know how to apply this theory in the teaching of Geography lessons in Social Studies. This has led to geography lessons being presented in a traditional way of give and take

leaving the learners with less desire to probe beyond what they see. Geography learning is more than just receiving facts but proving their validity through experimentation. Unlike History and Civics, lesson delivery in Geography requires that a teacher sets up an enabling environment with necessary facilities to allow learners participate rather than just being recipients of facts.

## **5.6 Summary**

The discussion on the challenges and opportunities presented by the teaching and learning of Geography as part of Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level in Serenje district is based on the problem statement and research questions presented in Chapter One and the literature reviewed presented in Chapter Two. In the main, data collected from interviews, discussions, document study and lesson observation confirmed that Geography lessons in Junior Secondary School Social Studies were being delivered with some challenges. The rationale for introducing Social Studies at Junior Secondary School level in Zambia was to focus on issues and problems relevant to the learner's experiences in today's changing environment. However, it was discovered that the Geography component was peculiar and needed special pedagogy when delivering lessons as it was more scientific and required learners to involve a more rational approach when finding solutions to societal problems. The reality on the ground was totally different as teachers still used traditional methods of teaching. Current pedagogical practice places emphasis on the constructivist theory which focuses more on the potential that the learners have to construct knowledge from the environment encountered instead of entirely depending on the teacher to learn. The findings also show that, although curriculum adjustment is necessary from time to time, the implementation process is not without problems and has major implications for teachers and learners. This study has also presented the opportunities that need to be undertaken by various stakeholders in the educational sector to attend to the various challenges that are posed by the teaching of Geography in Social Studies.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Overview

In this chapter, the researcher makes conclusions and recommendations concerning the study and also makes suggestions for further research. The aim of the study was to establish the challenges of teaching Geography as part of Social Studies in selected secondary schools in Serenje district. In line with this aim, the following recommendations have been made:

#### 6.2 Conclusions

The study revealed that some schools did not have even a single competent permanent teacher to teach all the components. This is at variance with the government policy of having only a single teacher to teach all the components of Social Studies. As per the new policy, learners are supposed to be handled by a single teacher who is well vested in the three components. Since the government has not deployed such teachers in schools, this has resulted in some schools using the unqualified teachers who have little pedagogical content knowledge of the Geography component. The implication of this status quo is that the teaching and learning of Social Studies, particularly the Geography component, is problematic. In the absence of qualified teachers, most teachers that were available struggled to teach more demanding and hands-on the topics, such as map reading and weather. Similarly, since the teachers lacked pedagogical know-how, most of them did not engage learners in skills development that required critical thinking and learners were also not allowed much time to fully participate in knowledge construction. The child-centred pedagogy was not adequately utilised to allow learners construct knowledge. This is to say that the traditional teacher-centred method of teaching which encourages rote learning should be avoided as it hampers creativity and only promotes docility in learners. Excursions in form of field trips are one way to motivate learners in Geography as children learn better through interaction with the environment.

The lack of qualified teachers of Social Studies is compounded by lack of quality and relevant teaching and learning resources that are consistent with the revised Social Studies curriculum. The provision of teaching and learning resources is the responsibility of government. Although teachers are required to be resourceful, certain materials like teacher's guide and atlases are a responsibility of the government.

The calibre of learners enrolled in some schools also posed a challenge since their literacy levels were very low. For most teachers, this problem emanated from the automatic qualification of grade sevens to junior secondary. The current government policy is that grade sevens should proceed to the next level regardless of their abilities to perform at that level. These forced teachers to turn into literacy teachers or resort to vernacular in order to make learners understand some points. With such a scenario, it became difficult for teachers explain geographical terms for learners to comprehend properly.

Based on these challenges, teachers requested that the government resort to the old system of allowing the Social Studies components to stand on their own until all the necessary conditions are attended to. Equally, the calibre of learners entering Junior Secondary School should be revisited to only allow learners who can perform well at that level to proceed.

The idea of having CPDs in schools is of great importance as it broadens teachers' thinking as they share ideas and compare notes. Consultations among teachers, even as peers, opens up the minds of individuals. Therefore, there was a feeling among teachers that CPDs should be enhanced in schools. Additionally, old teachers could be retrained through a fast-track systems. Retraining of the old staff will equip them with necessary skills to handle the Geography component. There was also a feeling that monitoring of teachers by both internal and external supervisors should be strengthened as it was lacking at the moment. This would enhance the quality of lesson preparation and delivery

### **6.3 Recommendations**

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- (a) Teachers who are trained in Social Studies ought to be employed to effectively teach the subject. This is coming from the finding that there were no teachers specifically trained to teach Social Studies in schools.
- (b) The provision of teaching and learning materials for Social Studies should be attended to as a matter of urgency. This is a matter for both the MoE and teachers. This is coming from the finding that there was a lack of teaching-learning resources in schools.
- (c) The Government should ensure that all the relevant Social Studies curriculum materials, such as syllabus, teachers' guides and text books, are developed and disseminated to all secondary schools at the right time.

- (d) The MoE to strengthen Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and re-training for the in-service teachers in Social Studies. This is coming from the finding that many teachers needed new skills and more content knowledge to teach Social Studies.
- (e) The automatic qualification of grade sevens to Junior Secondary School should be reconsidered. This is coming from the finding that some learners at Junior Secondary School level lacked literacy skills to learn at that level.
- (f) Monitoring of teachers should be strengthened. This is coming from the finding that there was little or no monitoring taking place in schools.
- (g) Teachers are also required to be innovative and fill up the gap where resources are scarce, through improvisation.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

1. Ascertain the effective practices for the teaching of map reading in Geography in Social Studies in Junior Secondary Schools.
2. Establish the challenges of learning and teaching the Geography component of secondary school Social Studies in Colleges of Education.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance



HSSREC FORM 1a

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**  
**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Telephone: +260-211-290258/293937  
Fax: +260-211-290258/293937

P O Box 32379  
Lusaka, Zambia

E-mail [drgs@unza.zm](mailto:drgs@unza.zm)

**APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSED RESEARCH  
INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS**

1. **TITLE OF STUDY:** Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography lessons in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: A study of selected schools in Serenje district, Zambia.

2. **Principal Investigator:**

Name: Frank Simfukwe  
degree

Qualifications: Bachelor's

Present Appointment/Affiliations: Senior Lecturer- Malcolm Moffat College of Education

3a. **OTHER INVESTIGATORS:**

Name:  
Present Appointment/Affiliations:

Qualifications:

Name:  
Present Appointment/Affiliations:

Qualifications

(Other names to be included on a separate page)

## Appendix 2: Approval of study



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**  
**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**RESEARCH DEPARTMENT**  
**APPROVAL OF STUDY**

19<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.

**REF NO.HSSREC-2020-AUG-009**

Frank Simfukwe  
**LUSAKA**

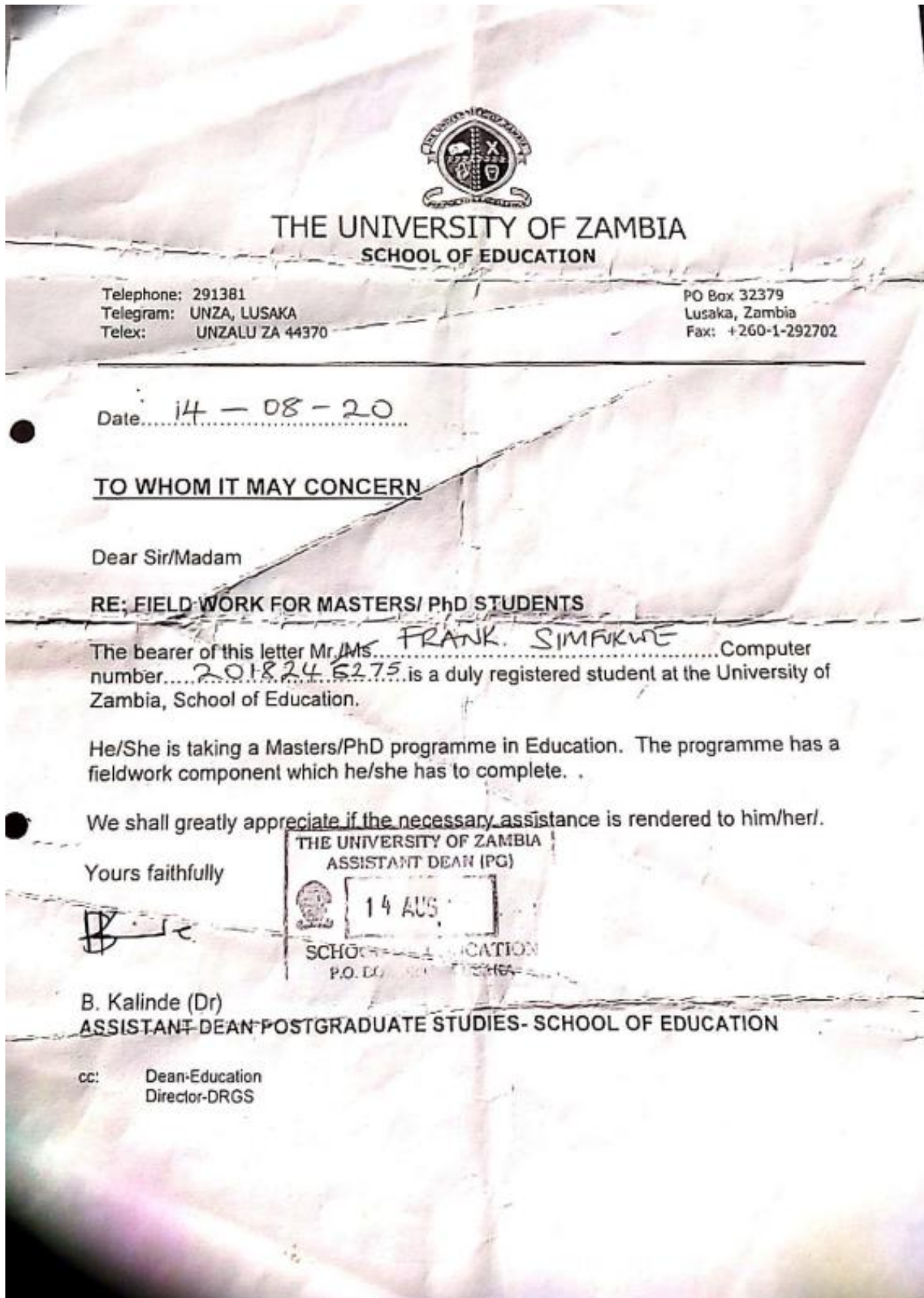
Dear Mr. Simfukwe,

**RE: "CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF TEACHING GEOGRAPHY LESSONS IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES: A STUDY OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN SERENJE DISTRICT - ZAMBIA"**

Reference is made to your protocol dated 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2020. 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-2020-AUG-009
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 19 <sup>th</sup> November, 2020	Expiry Date: 18 <sup>th</sup> November, 2021
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	18 <sup>th</sup> November, 2021
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English.</li> </ul>	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		

**Appendix 3: Introductory letter from the Dean**



**Appendix 4: Semi-structured Interview Guide for Heads of Department Social Studies**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

I am a student at the University of Zambia (UNZA) pursuing a Master of Education in Geography Education degree. As a requirement for my studies, I am expected to carry out a research and compile a report thereof. I am conducting a study on *Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: a study of selected schools in Serenje district- Zambia* and your school is among the ones selected.

Be assured that this research is purely academic and that the information you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Instructions:

**SECTION A: Particulars of Respondents**

1. Name of the school .....
2. Designation.....
3. Number of years in service .....
4. Number of years served in teaching Geography .....

**SECTION B: Research Questions**

5. Does your school have teachers trained to specifically teach Geography of the Junior Secondary School Social Studies syllabus?
6. If not, how is the teaching of the Geography component in Social Studies conducted at your school?
7. Do you monitor teachers of Geography in Social Studies?
8. If your answer is YES, how often?
9. What strategies do the teachers use in the teaching of Geography lessons in Social Studies at your school?
10. Does your school have the syllabus and teaching materials such as text books and other reference materials for the revised Junior Secondary School Social Studies?

11. If your answer is NO, what measures have you taken to provide these materials?
12. If the answer is YES, what materials are available?
13. Do teachers find challenges in the delivery of Geography lessons in the new Junior Secondary School Social Studies syllabus at your school?
14. If the answer is YES, state the challenges.
15. What measures do you think should be put in place to mitigate the challenges when teaching Geography lessons in Social Studies?
16. Have teachers of Social Studies at your school undergone any in-service training to equip them for quality teaching?
17. If your answer is NO, how do they manage? Give reasons.
18. How is assessment of learners done in the Geography component at your school?
19. How best do you think Social Studies ought to be taught at Junior Secondary School level?
20. What else would you like to add to what we have already discussed?

**Thank you so much for your participation**

## Appendix 5: Semi-structured Interview Guide for Teachers of Social Studies

### THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

#### DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

#### DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

I am a student at the University of Zambia (UNZA) pursuing a Master of Education in Geography Education degree. As a requirement for my studies, I am expected to carry out some research and compile a report thereof. I am conducting a study on *Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: a study of selected schools in Serenje district- Zambia*, and you have been selected as one of the respondents.

Be assured that this research is purely academic and that the information you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

#### SECTION A: Particulars of Respondent

1. Name of the school .....
2. Designation .....
3. Number of years in service .....

#### SECTION B: Research Questions

4. Are you trained specifically to teach the Geography component of the Junior Secondary School Social Studies syllabus?
5. If the answer is NO, how do you manage?
6. If the answer is YES, how do you rate your work?
7. Are you monitored as a teacher of Geography in Social Studies?
8. If not, what challenges are you facing?
9. What strategies do you use when teaching the Geography component of Social Studies?
10. What materials do you have to teach the revised Junior Secondary School Social Studies?
11. As a Social Studies teacher, have you undergone any in-service training to equip you for quality teaching?
12. If your answer is NO, how do you manage? Give reasons.
13. How do you assess learners in the Geography component of Social Studies?

14. How best do you think Social Studies ought to be taught at Junior Secondary School level?

Give reasons.

15. What else would you like to add to what we have already discussed?

**Thank you so much for your participation**

**Appendix 6: Focus Group Discussion Guide for Learners of Social Studies**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SECTION A: Welcome note and biographical information**

I welcome you to this in-depth interview. Be assured of confidentiality and information will only be used for research purposes only. The interview should take about 20-30 minutes.

1. School code: ..... Date.....
2. Grade: ..... Time.....
3. Sex:  Males  Females

**SECTION B: Research Questions**

4. Do you have specific teachers who teach the Geography component of Social Studies in your class?
5. If NOT, how are Geography lessons conducted?
6. Do you face any challenges in learning the Geography component of Social Studies?
7. If the answer is YES, what do you consider to be your main challenges?
8. Does the teacher ask questions, explain, or make comments that encourage you to be reflective about problem-solving in Geography? If so, how?
9. Does your school provide learning materials such as text books for Social Studies?
10. If YES, what materials does your school provide?
11. Does your teacher provide any assessments in your Geography lessons?
12. If the answer is YES, how beneficial are they?
13. Suggest what could be done to make Geography lessons interesting?
14. What else would you like to add to what we have already discussed?

**Thank you so much for your participation**

## Appendix 7: Observation Protocol for Teachers

### THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

#### DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

#### DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

#### Dear Participant,

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia (UNZA) pursuing a Master of Education in Geography Education degree. I am conducting research on the topic: *Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: a study of selected schools in Serenje district- Zambia*. This study is purely for academic purposes and not meant to cause you any mental or physical harm. All observations recorded will be taken as strictly confidential. You are, therefore, kindly requested to feel free as I observe your lesson.

School code:.....

Teacher's code:.....

Grade:.....

Time:.....

Number of learners: Boys.....

Girls.....

Date:.....

**RATINGS: 1=Unacceptable, 2= Satisfactory, 3= Good 4= Very Good.**

AREA OF ASSESSMENT	ITEMS BEING ASSESSED		RATING				COMMENTS
			1	2	3	4	
PLANNING	1	Schemes of work					
	2	Lesson Planning					
	3	Punctuality					
PRESENTATION	4	Introduction of the lesson					
	5	The use of teaching aids					
	6	The use of teaching methods in the introduction of the lesson.					

	7	Teacher preparedness for the lesson					
LESSON ORGANISATION AND PUPIL ASSESSMENT	8	Use of pupils' practical activity					
	9	Marking of pupils' work done					
	10	Remedial work					
	11	Appropriateness of the content to the learners					
COMMUNICATION	12	Teacher's questioning techniques skills					
	13	Pupil's participation in the learning process					
	14	Teacher-pupil interaction					
	15	Use of chalk board					
	16	Voice projection					
	17	Use of appropriate vocabulary					
	18	Does the teacher allow chorus answers in the process of teaching?					
	19	The use of teaching methods in the process of teaching					
OTHERS	20	Was the lesson enjoyed by the pupils					

	21	Knowledge of subject matter					
	22	Were the pupils able to answer teacher's questions?					
	23	Where the materials helpful and relevant to the learners?					
	24	Where there a discussion among the pupils?					
	25	Does the teacher apply the Geography skills in line with Social Studies syllabus?					
OVERAL RATING		OVERAL RATING					

General comments: .....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Areas to improve: .....

Name of the observer: ..... Signature: .....

## Appendix 8: Document Analysis Sheet

### THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

#### DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

#### DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

**Dear Participant,**

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia (UNZA) pursuing a Master of Education in Geography Education degree. I am conducting research on the topic, *Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: a study of selected schools in Serenje district- Zambia.*

You are kindly requested to participate in this research by providing me with your lesson plans and schemes of work. This study is purely for academic purposes and not meant to cause you any mental or physical harm. All observations recorded will be taken as strictly confidential. I, therefore, encourage you to feel free as I conduct document analysis.

School Code: ..... Teacher's Code: .....  
Grade Taught..... Time.....  
Number of Learners: Boys..... Girls.....  
Date..... Document Type.....

#### Observation Sheet for Teachers

S/NO	CRITERION	COMMENT
1.	Lesson plan depicting all necessary details	
2.	Outcomes based on the three domains	

3.	Learner-centred activities	
4.	Lesson plan showing teaching/learning aids	
5.	Lesson evaluation	

**GENERAL OBSERVATIONS**

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**Appendix 9: Letter of Permission for District Education Board Secretaries**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

The District Education Board Secretary,  
P.O. Box.....  
Serenje.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**Re: Request for Permission to Conduct Research in your district**

I am a student at the University of Zambia (UNZA) pursuing a Master of Education in Geography Education degree. As a requirement for my studies, I am expected to carry out some research and compile a report thereof. I am conducting a study on *Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: a study of selected schools in Serenje district- Zambia.*

This will entail observing the way teachers teach Social Studies to the grades eight and nine as well as conducting interviews with them and a selected sample of learners. I, therefore, request permission to conduct my study in your district. Please be assured that the identities of the schools, teachers and learners will be highly protected in order to comply with ethical requirements laid down by UNZA.

Thanks for your kind consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Simfukwe Frank

For any enquires, you may contact me on 0977488278 or Email:  
[franksimfukwe77@gmail.com](mailto:franksimfukwe77@gmail.com)

**Appendix 10: Letter of Permission for Head Teachers**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

The Head teacher,  
.....Secondary school,  
P.O. Box.....  
Serenje.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**Re: Request for Permission to Conduct Research in your School**

I am a student at the University of Zambia (UNZA) pursuing a Master of Education in Geography Education degree. As a requirement for my studies, I am expected to carry out some research and compile a report thereof. I am conducting a study on *Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: a study of selected schools in Serenje district- Zambia*.

This will entail observing the way teachers teach Social Studies to the grades eight and nine as well as conducting interviews with them and a selected sample of learners. I, therefore, request permission to conduct my study in your school. Please be assured that the identities of the school, teachers and learners will be highly protected in order to comply with ethical requirements laid down by UNZA.

Thanks for your kind consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Simfukwe Frank

For any enquires, you may contact me on 0977488278 or Email:  
[franksimfukwe77@gmail.com](mailto:franksimfukwe77@gmail.com)

**Appendix 11: Consent Form**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Topic: Challenges and opportunities of teaching Geography in Junior Secondary School Social Studies: a study of selected schools in Serenje district- Zambia.

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia pursuing a Master of Geography Education. I am conducting research to assess the teaching of Junior Secondary Geography in Social Studies in Selected Schools in Serenje, Zambia.

The research is meant for academic purposes only. You are kindly requested to provide answers to these questions as honestly as possible.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Read the consent of the agreement below and sign.

**CONSENT OF THE AGREEMENT SIGNED BY THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS.**

I have understood the instructions and conditions concerning the study and I agree to participate as he/she asks (participate as requested). I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any given time and that the information collected from the conversation will be confidential.

Signed.....

Date: .....

**Thank you for your participation.**