

**EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVIC EDUCATION AND VOTER
TURNOUT AMONG THE YOUTHS DURING ELECTIONS: A STUDY OF KABWE
CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY IN CENTRAL PROVINCE**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **Banda Tinenenji**, do hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that all the works of other persons used in this dissertation have been duly acknowledged through a reference page and that this work has never been submitted to the University of Zambia or any other university in Zambia.

SignedDate.....

APPROVAL

This dissertation done by **Banda Tinenenji** is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Civic Education by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between Civic Education and voter turnout among the youths in Kabwe Central Constituency of Central province. This study employed a qualitative research methodology. Total number of participants was 73. The participants were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The researcher collected data using interview guides and Focus Group Discussion guide. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study showed that voter education is one of the prominent component in civic education school curriculum. The findings of this study further showed that Civic Education and voter turnout are directly related in that Civic Education leads to higher voter turnout during elections. Furthermore, the study findings showed that unemployment, social media, corruption among other factors heavily contributes on the voter turnout among the youths.

Based on the findings, it was recommended that different stakeholders should join hands in supporting the government and civil society organizations in providing Civic Education. It was further recommended that all political parties should participate in providing voter education to the people and Schools of Education should strengthen the civic dimensions of pre-service and in-service education for teachers and administrators. Those who are already working in schools should also be offered the opportunity to acquire continuing education credits related to civic education so that they can become more skilled at inculcating the civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes students need to become responsible and engaged citizens.

Key Words: *Education, Civic Education, Voter Education*

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my beloved family who are: my husband, **Maybin Chansa**, my children, **Kutemwa, Lubuto and Malumbo Chansa**, my brothers **David, Landilani and Lekani Banda**, my sister **Carol Banda** and last but not the least my mother **Rose Chanda** and father **Billy Clement Banda** for their contribution towards my education.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACC	-	Anti-Corruption Commission
CE	-	Civic Education
CSOs	-	Civil Society Organizations
ECC	-	Electoral Code of Conduct
ECZ	-	Electoral Commission of Zambia
FODEP	-	Foundation for Democratic Process
HRC	-	Human Rights Commission
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organizations
PPL	-	Political Party Leaders
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
US	-	United States
CPS	-	Continuous Professional Service
FDG	-	Focus Group Discussion

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

The chapter contains the background information to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation, limitation, theoretical and conceptual frameworks and operational definitions of terms used in the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Among advanced democracies, the United States has the largest age gap in voter turnout (Holbein, 2020). For example, in the 2021 general election, voter turnout among young people, aged 18 to 24 years, was approximately 25 percentage points lower than those aged 65 to 74 years (Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), 2021). Despite reaching one of its highest levels ever in 2021 since the legalization of voting at 18 years old (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), 2021), youth voter turnout remains low at 32%. Such low youth turnout is particularly concerning as several studies show that early voting experiences predict future voting participation (Coppock and Green, 2016; Fujiwara et al., 2016).

Scholars, educators and policymakers often recommend civic education as a solution to low youth voter turnout (Battistoni, 2013; Campbell et al., 2012; National Council for the Social Studies, 2005). They often argue that civic education prepares students to become responsible and participatory citizens by teaching them civic knowledge (for example voting processes and electoral systems), values, and skills (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). A growing body of research has evaluated that claim by examining the effect (or lack thereof) of civic education in on voter turnout. However, the relationship between civic education and youth voter turnout have been precluded by uneven access to (Xu et al., 2021), along with significant selection bias involved in the enrollment in such courses. Furthermore, little attention has been paid to understanding the effects of civic education in some countries on voter turnout. Indeed, we are aware of very few studies that have evaluated the effect of Civic Education on voter turnout. However, even that study primarily evaluated the effect on students' civic knowledge (Campbell, 2016). It is therefore estimated that this study the causal effect of Civic Education youth voter

turnout leveraging variation in the adoption of the Civic Education (CE) policy across country and time. CE is the most standardized subject policy, requiring high school students to take, and in some cases pass, a civics test as a condition for graduation (Civics Education Initiative, 2017). As of 2022, the country implemented a version of CE. Essentially, CE aims to ensure that all students have the bare minimum of (political) knowledge” necessary to become active and engaged citizens. Since CE was introduced, scholars have criticized its narrow focus on political knowledge and questioned its effectiveness (Brezicha and Mitra, 2019, Kahne, 2015; Levine, 2015). CE, however, has not been empirically evaluated at all, let alone using rigorous descriptive techniques. Learners therefore have limited knowledge of whether and how such civic education affect political outcomes, including voter participation (Civics Education Initiative, 2017).

To fill this Civic knowledge gap, this study was conducted to examine the relationship between Civic Education on youth voter turnout. This was not unsurprising that requiring the civic education failed to move the needle on youth voter participation in the general election at a time of historic uncertainty. Zambia is actively grappling with the pandemic of youth low voter turnout, the far-reaching consequences of persistent structural tribalism and high political polarization.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The idea of Civic Education is a global desire because it offers opportunities to the citizens to acquire skills needed for their full participation, which later get yield to development of any given nation (FODEP, 2019). However, in spite of the fact that Civic Education is geared towards having free, fair and verifiable elections, there has been outstanding gaps in the participation of the electorates informed by the lazy and lack of political goodwill to provide quality and timely voter education to the youths across the country (Hussein, 2019). This has led to persistent political manipulation of the electorate by the political class, through enticement, where votes are bought through cash, and other goods, eventually impacting the governance efficacy due to poor choice of leaders (Mulubale, 2017). Although the government and other stakeholders have always made efforts to create awareness and conducive environment to citizens by setting rules, regulations, and by-laws as well as providing Civic Education to make sure there is high turnout, voter turnout during elections leaves much to be desired. The number of registered voters in Zambia and those who take part in voting is generally on the decline. For example, in 2021 only 34 505 young citizens voted against a total of 66 497 registered voters in Kabwe Central Constituency. This

shows a fundamental problem on why citizens who register to vote do not turn up on a poll day (ECZ, 2021). This scenario prompted the researcher to conduct a study to examine the relationship between Civic Education and voter turnout among the youths, of Kabwe Central Constituency.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Civic Education and voter turnout among the youths in Kabwe Central constituency of Central province.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To explore the Voter Education content in Civic Education programmes in school curriculum.
2. To determine the effect of Civic Education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths in Kabwe District.
3. To examine factors that can foster high voter turnout during elections among youths in Kabwe Central Constituency

1.5 Research Questions

1. How has been the voter education content in Civic Education programmes in school curriculum?
2. How effective is Civic Education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths?
3. What are some of the factors that can be used to foster high voter turnout during elections among youths in Kabwe Central Constituency?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The information to be gathered from the study may be used to inform policy makers in formulation and adjustment of policies on Civic Education for efficiency. The study may be beneficial to scholars as it may contribute to plugging knowledge gap in line with how Civic Education affects governance. This study may add value to the body of knowledge in the field of Civic Education.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted in Kabwe Central Constituency. This area was chosen because it suits well with the current study. The study examined the relationship of Civic Education voter turnout among the youths of Kabwe District.

1.8. Limitation of the study

This study was done in one constituency only. Hence, the limitation is that the findings may not be generalized to other parts of the constituencies in Zambia. However, the researcher used pilot testing as a way of mitigating the challenges of this study. The study engaged other valid data source of data collection techniques that may enable the findings of the study.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

The study used participatory theory as propounded by Robert Dahl (1956). This theory is anchored on the idea that the people's political participation is the basic principle of democracy, which also denotes the active involvement of individuals and groups in the governmental processes affecting their lives. The theory suggests that when citizens themselves play an active role in the process of formulation and implementation of public policies and decisions, their activity is called political participation. The relevance of the participation theory in this study is that, it enables active involvement of people in politics particularly in voting pattern results to change and therefore leads to good governance. This theory informs this study as it advocates for active participation on the part of citizens.

1.12 Definitions of key Terms

Civic Education: this is knowledge in self- governance, the provision of information and learning experiences to equip and empower citizens to participate in democratic processes (Hoskins, 2016).

Civic skills: Civic skills are the knowledge, abilities and attitudes that people need to be able to take an active role in society and to be “engaged citizens” (Mainde and Chola, 2020).

Constitution: Refers to a legal document with the force of law that defines the structure of the government in a given country and the relationship between a government and the people. It

reflects the ideals and aspirations of the country and articulates the values that bind its people and discipline its government (Lerner, 2011).

Elections - This is an organized way, where citizens or voters of a given place or country are allowed to make political decisions through a democratic process (Syvertsen, 2019).

Voter Education: This is the process by which citizens are educated and empowered to clearly understand their rights and responsibilities in electoral processes and how they can vote (Campbell, 2016).

1.12 Chapter Summary

The chapter contained the background information to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation, limitations, conceptual framework and operational definitions of terms used in the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter presents a review of work that has been done in Zambia and other parts of the world on Civic Education, elections and voter turnout among the youths. The chapter starts by explaining what Civic Education entails. It will then explore literature on civic education and voter turnout as well as how civic education affect voter turnout among youths in Zambia as well as around the world.

2.1 Meaning and Domains of Civic Education

The term civic is a Latin word *civicus*“ which entail, relating to a citizen” and the word denotes the behavior affecting other citizens, particularly in the context of development. Thus, Civic Education can could be defined as the study of the rights and obligations of citizens in society (UNDP, 2012). Additionally, the term Civic Education in some other parts of the world is also known as Citizen Education in democracy education and can precisely be defined as the provision of information and learning experiences to equip and empower citizens to participate in democratic processes. CE promotes participation of citizens in all aspects of society which is central to the advancement of democratic institutions and an important precursor for promoting social justice and human rights. Civic Education plays a pivotal role in strengthening civic vitality by offering individuals the opportunity and knowledge to influence the nature and direction of society. Additionally, it equips them with skills and competencies to contribute positively to their professions and to function successfully in a globalized community (Sieriakova & Valigura, 2016). The literature above indicates that indeed CE is very vital in increasing voter turnout. However, from the recent 2021 general election conducted in Zambia did not show the significance of CE on voter turnout. This is evident in Kabwe Central Constituency very few voters did participate in the voting process thereby prompting the researcher to conduct a study to examine the relationship of CE and voter turnout.

In line with the above assertion, Vasiljevic (2019), asserted that Civic Education is a way that initiate effective participation in a democratic and development process. In line with an Australian report on education, the subject of Civic Education provides opportunities to young people to

become active and informed citizens in global contexts. In pursuit of Ukraine's pro-European agenda, Ukraine adopted a Law on Education (2017) which declared that the prime purpose of education in the country lies in the upbringing of informed and socially responsible citizens (p. 8). Citizens' rights and responsibilities to the society are premised upon individuals having access to and "obtaining civic education aimed at forming competences related to exercising rights and duties by a person as a member of the society, awareness about values of the civil (free democratic) society, the rule of law, human and civil rights and freedoms" (the Law of Ukraine on Education, p. 9).

The above indicated law proved that teaching Civic Education is an empowerment to learners to become actively involved citizens in government. The best example where Civic Education has been viewed as showing positivity in its implementation is in America. The clear indication can be traced from its good democracy dispensations. It is therefore, imperative to take the study of Civic Education seriously as it has the ability to provide responsibility to actively engage the youth in public affairs thereby leading to higher voter turnout. Vasiljevic (2019), adds that, Civic Education gives a platform for learning one's rights before engaged into participation. Therefore, civic programs offered at any level must incorporate an activity, which enables learners to start engaging themselves influencing government decision as well as being involved in decision making of the country. Nevertheless, from the recent 2021 general election conducted in Zambia did not show the significance of CE on voter turnout despite it being a compulsory subject in Zambia as it is the case in Kabwe Central Constituency. This is evident in Kabwe Central Constituency very few voters did participate in the voting process thereby prompting the researcher to conduct a study to examine the relationship of CE and voter turnout.

According to Gomez (2012) as cited by Muleya (2019), Civic Education again known as citizen education has the ability to sharpen critical thinking capacity of young people, which is important in the analysis of political, social and cultural issues as well as preparing them for the roles and responsibilities and for the challenges or uncertainties of life through providing relevant education. In addition to Muleya's definition, Blais et al (2016) enhances that Civic Education does not only relate to political, social and cultures aspects but it is a subject that has potential to instill awareness which later brings about sustainable development when the youths get involved in the governance of the country. Blais definition, indicates the results also brings fruitfulness of the field in terms of

accumulation of knowledge and using such knowledge for transformation of any society thereby improving democracy. Mahafza (2014 as cited by Ngozwana 2017) asserts that Civic Education in a democratic society should focus on self-government and therefore has to promote people's understandings of democracy ethics and the rational obligations towards the values and principles of democracy.

2.2 Civic Education and Voter Turnout

Civic Education is often viewed as an effective remedy for low youth voter turnout by scholars, educators and policymakers alike (Battistoni, 2013). Specifically, Civic Education is expected to prepare students to be responsible and participatory citizens by teaching them political knowledge, values, and skills (National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). Despite this expectation, few studies empirically evaluate the effect of Civic Education on voter participation, especially compared to the number of studies on other civic engagement outcomes, such as political knowledge and interest (Holbein, 2020, for a good overview of the efficacy of Civic Education in schools). In addition, most observational studies suffer from selection bias; that is, people who are more civically engaged and thus more likely to vote are also more likely to enroll in civics courses. To overcome this key limitation, scholars have recently begun employing more rigorous quasi-experimental research designs, including family-fixed effects and difference in differences. For example, Weinschenk and Dawes (2022) compared voter turnout among siblings who were differentially exposed to civic education but had common, shared family backgrounds using family-fixed effects. Furthermore, Holbein, (2020) estimated the causal effect of Civic Education on youth voter turnout using state-level variation in AP civic-related course enrollments using a difference in differences design. Concerning, all of these rigorous studies found no effect of civic education on youth voter turnout.

While there has been a growing body of research on the effect of taking civics courses (Bell et al., 2022; 2020; Weinschenk & Dawes, 2022), the effect of civic education policies on youth voter turnout remains largely unexplored. Campbell (2014) and Campbell and (2016) are notable exceptions that explore the effect of state-level, high-stakes civics exams on civic knowledge and voter turnout. Using National Assessment of Educational Progress data and ordinary least squares regression, (2016) found that students who had taken civics tests showed higher political knowledge than those who did not. They also showed that this association was especially prominent among

Latin students. However, Campbell (2014) did not find any significant relationship between these state-level civic assessment policies and voter turnout. In sum, despite the growing body of literature and ongoing public debate (Vara, 2015), scholars know little about the causal impact of the Civic Education on youth turnout. This study aims to fill this gap by leveraging variation in a recent state-level civic education.

Among various forms of civic engagement, such as volunteering, organizing, and community-based participation to improve civic life broadly, we focus on voter turnout in this article. Supporters of CE highlighted voter turnout as a potential outcome that CE aimed to improve (Civics Education Initiative, 2017), so it is important to evaluate the effect of CE on this outcome of interest. In addition, because voter turnout is measured consistently across a long time period and is available from national datasets such as CPS, this analysis on a consequential civic engagement outcome is possible.

That said, voting participation does not capture all forms of civic engagement. Voting is not the only civic engagement outcome that matters to society nor is it the exclusive focus of CE. Indeed, CE policy documents emphasize that these policies aim to foster “active and engaged citizens,” which requires more than voting participation. In addition, CE advocates emphasize that civic knowledge is the first stage for active civic engagement. Thus, CE’s impact on other civic outcomes, such as civic knowledge and volunteering, should be examined as well to better understand the overall effectiveness on voter turnout.

2.3 Effect of Civic Education on Enhancing Voter Turnout among the Youths

In the resource model framework, one of the most prominent theories of voter participation, individuals’ political participation is influenced by their political resources, including time, money, and cognitive abilities, including verbal skills and political knowledge (Vara, 2015). These resources are hypothesized to promote political participation by lowering the costs of participation. In terms of youth voter participation, verbal skills and political knowledge, which are mostly acquired in school, have been considered to be the most crucial political resources. This framework suggests that political knowledge gained through preparation for and participation in civics tests may boost voter participation by reducing the informational cost of voting. As a result of CE, which requires students to pass the test on 100 basic civic education-related facts, students may

gain political knowledge of how the government and politics work (Hess et al., 2015). And this political knowledge, in turn, may translate to higher voter participation, as envisaged by the CE advocates (Civics Education Initiative, 2017).

On the other hand, “political knowledge” is a fairly broad construct. Some types of political knowledge, such as factual knowledge about political institutions, structures, and history, may not be relevant to voting at all. Some scholars have argued that the knowledge needed to vote might be more specific than general political knowledge (Cramer, 2017; Lupia, 2016). Empirical research also shows that an understanding of current political and social debates as well as the mechanics of voting could more effectively reduce the cost of voting than more general political knowledge. Indeed, knowledge required for the civics test, including “the name of the territory the United States purchased in 1803” and “the name of the longest rivers in the United States,” may not be necessary for voting (Hess et al., 2015; Kahne, 2015; Levine, 2015; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, 2022). In other words, the political knowledge gained through preparing for and taking the civics test may not necessarily reduce the informational cost of voting because such knowledge is not useful in voting contexts. In addition, considering the failure of traditional civic education, which also often emphasizes mastering facts about government and politics, in increasing voter turnout (Holbein, 2020; Weinschenk & Dawes, 2022), this knowledge-focused policy may not be sufficient to improve youth turnout. Accordingly, there might be a null relationship between CE and voter turnout.

A third possibility is that the implementation of CE may negatively impact young voter turnout by limiting students’ opportunities to develop political skills and attitudes that assist them in overcoming barriers to voting. In illustrating the limitation of memorizing facts, recent scholarship underscores the importance of practical experience and skills in becoming an empowered, active, and engaged citizen (Brezicha and Mitra, 2019; Holbein, 2020). For example, Holbein (2020) showed that non-cognitive skills, including perseverance, determination, and self-control, are crucial for youth in following through on their intention to vote. Similarly, Cohodes and Feigenbaum (2021) showed that the gains in voter turnout among girls who attended high-performing charter schools in Boston were largely through the development of psychosocial skills. In light of the prior research emphasizing political skills, scholars and educators have cautioned that civics tests may narrow the content of civic education and turn it into a memory exercise

(Brezicha & Mitra, 2019; Levine, 2015). Indeed, Brezicha and Mitra, (2019) found that when schools administer civic assessments, civic learning becomes confined to measured content. Teachers have also expressed that it is difficult to conduct engaging activities such as a mock election when they have standardized tests (Holbein, 2020). In sum, the Civic Education might encroach upon students' time for practical skills that meaningfully increase voter turnout.

Considering the debate surrounding the Civic Education, one would expect vibrant literature evaluating its effectiveness. However, research on the CE policy is surprisingly scarce, and as a result, we know little about the impact of the civics education on youth voter turnout. This study makes a significant contribution to the literature on civic education policy by estimating the causal effect of civic education on youth voter turnout for the first time.

2.4 Factors that can Foster High Voter Turnout among Youths

Democracy is one of the factors which leads to high voter turnout among the youths especially in the case of Zambia. When learners learn about their democratic rights of making decisions through voting, they tend to exercise their civil rights. Civic Education has been linked to democracy. This is owing to the fact that many authors like Niworo (2016) among others did a study to ascertain the impact of Civic Education on political participation in the Sissala East District of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The study reported that students who did Civic Education had high levels of political participation, including the readiness to vote, join political party, contest elections, and participate in community service and demanding for accountability from the leaders. It has to be alluded that although the researcher used both primary and secondary data, the findings from this study cannot be relied upon. This is so owing to the fact that it was discovered that in the same country others conducted the studies on the same topic and gave a different picture.

Further, Commonwealth Observer Mission (2015) did a study to examine the impact of democratic Civic Education programs. It was established that Civic Education programs had the largest effects on political knowledge. Finkel (2015), in the study on the Impact of Adult Civic Education Programs in Developing Democracies, recognized that programs geared towards achieving Civic Education can indeed be successful at providing factual information about democratic political processes and institutions. In the same study Civic Education impact evaluations of USAID-sponsored programs conducted in different countries found that exposure to the Civic Education

had significant effects on political knowledge and awareness of various kinds in terms of local level political participation of citizens in these countries. Nevertheless, it can be stated that these studies fail to show whether these Civic Education programs initiated by and the methods employed by these key players have had any impact on adherence to democratic values, governance and on support for political institutions.

Furthermore, a power of faith message is motivating for young adults. Scholars focused on youth participation (Adebayo, 2018, Holbein and Hillygus, 2020) have recently identified several especially important barriers to youth participation, including lack of grit and political efficacy. Holbein and Hillygus (2020) find that lower political participation among younger cohorts stems partly from a lack of experience overcoming obstacles to participation (due to their relatively recent eligibility to vote) and because of disenchantment about the potential for their individual actions to make change (often due to dominance of the political arena by older cohorts). Accordingly, in the more secular setting of that study, the authors found that measures promoting grit, persistence and self-efficacy increased youth political participation.

A study that was done by Holbein et al., (2020) to ascertain the impact of Civic Education on citizen political participation in Ghana showed that indeed civic education has a great impact on the citizen political participation. It showed that in any democratic dispensation of the country citizen participation is key. Citizens need to participate in all governance process. They can participate directly or indirectly through elected representatives. It can be stated that indeed without civic skills that are been taught in CE citizens may not participate in democratic process which in turn inhibits democratic dispensation. Holbein et al., (2020) argues that the most basic signposts of a democracy is citizen participation in government. Participation is the key role of citizens in democracy. It is not only their right, but it is their duty. Citizen participation may take many forms including standing for election, voting in elections, becoming informed, debating issues, attending community or civic meetings, being members of private voluntary organizations, paying taxes, and even protesting. Participation builds a better democracy.

The significance of healthcare as an integral part of human welfare fundamentally impacts voters' decision-making processes. Voters' personal encounters with the healthcare system, whether satisfying or disappointing, and their perception of the system's overall performance hold considerable sway over their voting choices. Haselswerdt (2018) noted that individuals' personal

experiences with healthcare can guide their voting choices. Experiences that meet or exceed expectations can solidify support for the current system or incumbent politicians, whereas subpar experiences can stimulate a call for change, prompting voters to lean against the existing political order. Moreover, Gollust and Rahn (2019) discovered that personal health crises, such as severe illnesses or accidents, can substantially realign voters' priorities. In these situations, voters tended to assign a greater weight to healthcare policies when casting their votes

Additionally, CE tries to inculcate in young ones the spirit democratic societies are politically tolerant. This means that while the majority of the people rule in a democracy, the rights of the minority must be protected. People who are not in power must be allowed to organize and speak out. Minorities are sometimes referred to as the opposition because they may have ideas which are different from the majority. Individual citizens must also learn to be tolerant of each other. A democratic society is often composed of people from different cultures, racial, religious and ethnic groups who have viewpoints different from the majority of the population. A democratic society is enriched by diversity (Holbein and Hillygus, 2020). However, if the opposite is the case, citizens with the civic skills in mind, they will be able to turn out in numbers to vote so that they remove the government that tries to silence or destroy democracy. One goal of democracy is to make the best possible decision for the society. To achieve this, respect for all people and their points of view is needed. Decisions are more likely to be accepted, even by those who oppose them, if all citizens have been allowed to discuss debate and question them. The fight against equality is further what triggers youths to become frustrated and turn up in numbers to vote. This is owing to the fact that according to Holbein and Hillygus (2020) who conducted a survey in Zimbabwe found that democratic societies emphasize the principle that all people are equal. This entails that all individuals are valued equally, have equal opportunities and may not be discriminated against because of their race, religion, ethnic group, gender or sexual orientation. In a democracy, individuals and groups still maintain their right to have different cultures, personalities, languages and beliefs. This simply shows that indeed civic education has great value in as much as voter turnout is concerned. This is because without CE people may not be in the position of fighting against the much required equality in society.

Furthermore, the study conducted by Niworo (2016) to determine the factors that led to high voter turnout during elections in Ghana reported that many youths participated in the voting process as

a way of showing displeasure of the corruption activities that were taking place in government during those days. He stressed that many youths who were civically minded thought that democratic societies try to prevent any elected official or group of people from misusing or abusing their power. One of the most common abuses of power noted was corruption. This occurs when government officials use public funds for their own benefit or exercise power in an illegal manner. He further frazzled that when youths saw that there was too much corruption which was visible even to the common man and the government does not protect against these abuses. They raised to the occasion to vote to show their displeasure.

Social media is another factor that can foster high voter turnout and for this reason, a research conducted by Pew Research Politics, (2018) on the generation gap in American politics, illustrates how their studies have shown that people's use of social media, especially political and civic engagement, and has a positive impact on voting behavior. This is true for teenagers' especially young adults who are constantly exposed to social media. Additionally, social media is a technology platform with wide reach and influence that allows people to create and share their opinions on politics and other issues despite opposition virtually.

Aytac, et al (2020) argue that the reason unemployed people are more expected to be politically active when the economy is bad is because, they receive more attention when the economy is bad. This happens because political rivals have an incentive to blame incumbent officials for poor economic performances and therefore, following the discourse of blame will ultimately anger the unemployed and strengthen their willingness to vote. This argument is in line with what Wichowsky (2014) who conducted a research on unemployment and voter turnout, indicated that the more unemployed there are, (youths) the more the eligible voters (whether unemployed or employed) who come to vote, believe they share concerns and fears of business and management, and respect the status quo and show that they want change by voting. Therefore, their questions need to be explained to them by ushering in a new government with the hope of getting employed afterwards. This can also be related to the Zambian elections which were held in 2021 youths turned out in largest numbers since Zambia's multiparty elections, youth by the name of Jack Kalimbe was interviewed and responded that "young people voted in large numbers in order to correct the mistakes of their parents" (ECZ 2021). This shows that when people are aware of their

role in society, they turn to engage them in political participation and therefore increases voter turnout.

In a research conducted by Bartels and Larry (2008) on unequal democracy for that income inequality can also influence voting decision, from their study it was found out that individuals in societies with higher levels of income inequality are more likely to support the opposition parties with the hope of increasing their pay, when they are ushered into power. Moreover, other studies have shown that the impact of income on voting can vary depending on other factors such as education, level, and occupation among others. This can agree with the findings in a recent study on a large sample of countries which shows that countries with high economic inequality have less voting revenue (Amat and Beramendi, 2016, Jensen and Jespersen, 2017; Matsubayashi and Sakaiya, 2018). Additionally, children growing up in families exposed to outside unearned income through government cash transfers are more likely to vote as adults, even if their parents did not vote. Akee et al (2018). From this literature highlighted, it can be noted that low income citizens are more likely to take in elections with the hope of a good economy.

Many authors like Mason (2018) sees political ideology as a pull to higher voter turnout. This refers to a set of beliefs, values, and principles that shape one's views on social, economic, and political issues. These ideologies often align with specific political parties or movements. Political leanings, whether tilting conservative or liberal, play a substantial role in guiding electoral choices. These leanings act as a bridge, linking voters to candidates that reflect their intrinsic values and policy inclinations. Those aligned with conservative values typically emphasize societal order, the importance of a laissez-faire economic stance, and a strong national defense, leading them to side with candidates who vocalize these priorities. In contrast, liberal-minded voters usually champion societal progression, economic regulation, and a wider embrace of inclusivity, driving their support toward candidates with these viewpoints. In conclusion, political ideology serves as a significant predictor of voting decisions. Understanding an individual's ideological stance provides insights into their policy preferences and the political parties or candidates they are likely to support.

The study by Kaumba (2015) on an examination of student's perceptions of public participation in national governance in rural voting: a case of University of Zambia reported students' views on three major governance issues: human rights, media and access to information, and the relationship

between the police and society and the role they play in national governance. It was found that students had a positive attitude towards participation in national governance. Furthermore, it was noted that Zambia's failure to promote and preserve political rights was the result of improper application of the public order act. The levels of public participation in national governance have been adversely affected by the existence of police that prioritize the interests of the government over those of the public. The police made it hard for the realization of rights to freely assemble, protest and demonstrate as modes of citizens' engagement in affairs that govern them. Public media as an important element in democratic governance suffered setbacks with a heavy government control.

2.5 Knowledge Gap

Scholarly research has paid more attention on the mechanisms and effects that leads to political decisions without putting emphasis on the relationship of CE and voter turnout. However, the knowledge that encourages political decisions and deliberations lacked because they did not consider CE as the primary force that could bring voter behavior among youths. Examining the relationship between CE and voter turnout is vital because it helps in mobilizing the electorate to take part in the electoral process. Thus, the purpose of this study bridged the gap.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This study presented the literature review. Data was presented based on its relevance to the current study. However, a big gap was seen in the reviewed literature which led to conducting the current study. As observed in the literature through Civic Education, an individual becomes sensible and disciplined member of their communities. It was from this that the researcher opted to go ahead and conduct a study to examine whether the current content in of Civic Education curriculum is well responsive enough to equip students with requisite skills that will make them function effectively and contribute productively to the growth and development of the society.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter presents and describes the general methodology which was used in the study. It describes the Research Approach, Research Design, Target Population, Sample Size, Sampling Procedure, Data Collection Procedures, Data Collection Instruments, Data Analysis, Trustworthiness, Ethical Consideration and Chapter Summary.

3.1 Research Approach

The researcher used the qualitative research approach because it allowed the researcher to access to people's perceptions and understandings. As argued by Jones (1985:46 cited in Punch, 2005) who contend that in order to understand other person's construction of reality, we would do well to ask them and to ask them in such a way that they can tell us their own terms rather than those imposed rigidly on them by ourselves. Therefore, the use of qualitative allowed differing world views and tradition to be accommodated, rather than simplifying or misrepresenting views and opinions to fit into predetermined categories as indicated in this study.

3.2 Research Design

The nature of the research was qualitative. Thus, the design that was used in this study was the descriptive research design. Qualitative research entailed a descriptive kind of research which involved questions that focused on obtaining in-depth explanations of the issues under investigation. This enabled the researcher to answer both the how and what questions for a deeper understanding of the research problem.

3.3 Study Site and Target Population

This study covered Kabwe Central Constituency. This area was chosen because it has a lot of number of the voters who are the youths. The participants were divided into five categories namely ECZ officials, political party leaders, Civic Education teachers, Civic Education learners and youths who registered voters because these participants will have information necessary for the study.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size for the study was 73 respondents. Particularly, it consisted of 20 youths in the district, 5 political party leaders, 5 NGOs that look at governance such as (FODEP, Young Christian Association, Caritas Zambia and women for change), 25 learners from 5 schools meaning 5 from each school, 15 Civic Education teachers from 5 schools and 3 ECZ officials. The sample size was considered representative enough to be able to make generalizations.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

In this research, purposive sampling technique was used. Snow ball sampling was used to select 20 youths in the district, 5 political party leaders, 25 Learners, 5 NGOs, the purposive sampling was utilized for selecting officials from ECZ and NGOs.

3.6 Data Collection Tools

The researcher collected data using interview guide. It was important to use this instrument of data collection as a way of ensuring trustworthiness of the study. The instrument was used to collect qualitative data in order to answer questions that were raised in the study.

3.6.1 Interview Guide

Interviews were used to collect data from the key informants which included the ECZ and NGOs, political party leaders and Civic Education teachers. All the interviews were conducted by the researcher. The format of these interviews were semi-structured as a list of questions in form of an interview guide which were prepared in advance before the interview. The use of semi-structured interview enabled the researcher to explore areas of interest from the responses which were given by key informants. A voice recorder was used to record information during interviews together with note taking by the researcher. The information given by the interviewee were tested through cross-examination to identify emotional excesses and sentimental outbursts.

3.7 Data Analysis

For this study, the qualitative data that was collected from the respondents using open-ended questions was analysed using content analysis. This kind of analysis involved going through the

contents of the in-depth explanations given by the informants and presenting them in a narrative form. Contradictory and similar views were particularly analyzed and categorized into themes and patterns in order to draw conclusions.

3.8 Trustworthiness

In order to ascertain the trustworthiness of the data that was collected in the field, the researcher used several methods of testing the data. The research used triangulation as the method of testing the quality of data collected. The researcher used investigator triangulation which allowed the researcher to use more than one researcher adds to the credibility of a study in order to mitigate the researcher's influence. Also, the researcher used methodical triangulation were the researcher used more than one method, e.g. mixed methods approach, however with focus on qualitative methods.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

The researcher obtained permission from the university through the ethical and clearance committee and Permission was also sought from the civic leader's offices of the district to allow the researcher to freely interact with the participants. In order to protect participants in the study, information regarding privacy, anonymity and confidentiality, benefits and risks in participation in the study were outlined in the participant information sheet before obtaining a written consent. The participants were also informed that their participation in the study was purely voluntary and therefore, they were free to withdraw or not answer any question deemed sensitive.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter described the methodology used to collected data. The methodology was purely qualitative with a sample of 73 snow balling and purposively selected. Research instruments included interview guide and focus group discussion. Data was collected and analysed using a thematic analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section begins by giving background information of the respondents while the second part is a presentation of the research findings in relation to the three research objectives of the study.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 the demographic characteristics of respondents included their gender, age and education level.

Gender		Frequency	Percentage
Male		52	71.23
Female		21	28.77
Age	15-35	15	20.5
	36-50	30	41.1
	51-60	10	13.7
	61-70	10	13.7
		8	11
Educational level			
Degree		15	28.3
Masters		10	18.9
Diploma		28	52.3
Marital status			
Married		20	27.4
Divorced		35	47.9
Single		10	13.7
Widow and widowers		8	11

Table 1 above, indicates that out of the 73 respondents targeted, 71.23% (52) were males and respondents representing 28.77% (21) were females. This indicates that the majority of the

respondents were males and females were few. On the age variable, 23 were in the age group of 15-35 years representing 32%; 27 were in the age group of 36-50 years representing 37%; 15 were in the age group of 51-60 years representing 21% and 8 were in the age group of 61 to 70 years representing 11%. 28.3 % of the respondents were degree holders, 18.9% of the respondents were master’s degree holders while 52.3% of the respondents interviewed were diploma holders. Further, the figure shows that 27.3% were married, 45.2% were singles, and 20.5% were divorcees while 6.8% of the respondent’s interviewed were widows and widowers.

4.2 Voter Education Content in Civic Education Programs in School Curriculum.

Results

All the participants defined themselves as civically engaged but offered different interpretations of the of the content of voter education in Civic Education. The recurring themes that emerged include civic knowledge, skills and disposition, politics" and "values".

Table 3: Thematic strands on voter education content in civic education

Civic knowledge	Values	Skills	Disposition
Political knowledge Governance Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ freedom of speech ✓ freedom of choice ✓ respect for different points of view ✓ global citizenship values ✓ multiculturalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ voting / encouraging others to vote ✓ staying informed about the political affairs ✓ attending rallies ✓ disseminating political information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ improving the country’s image ✓ showcasing the finer points of national culture

Civic Knowledge

Civic Knowledge as the content of voter education content part of Civic Education. The participants were asked to state whether there is Voter Education content in Civic Education school curriculum, 8 Civic Education teachers expressed that indeed there is Voter Education Content in the Civic Education school curriculum. For example, participant 1 as abbreviated as P1 mentioned that:

Indeed, we have voter education content in the curriculum. Civic education provides a basic and realistic understanding of civic life, politics, and government. It familiarizes students with the constitutions of the Zambia and the state in which they live, because these and other core documents are criteria which can be used to judge the means and ends of government.

The researcher concluded that there is voter education content in Civic education, which entails that students are acquainted with relevant knowledge in order to prepare them for future political participation. This can be noted from participants who said that Civic Education in school curriculum offer civic knowledge to the young ones that is essential in the democratic dispensation of the country. P2 stated that:

We do have voter education content in civic education curriculum. It is just unfortunate that as teachers, we neglect some of the important components on voter education. So, some learners miss out. Because Civic Education enable citizens to understand the workings of their own and other political systems, as well as the relationship of the politics and government of their own country to world affairs. It emphasizes the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy. Through civic education students are taught to hold that governments are instituted to secure the rights of citizens.

From the forgoing, the researcher came to a conclusion that, voter education should be the key topic when teaching Civic Education in that, learners are regarded to be the future leaders of any nation and teachers of civic education teachers must take this topic seriously in the school curriculum, if this knowledge is given to them at an early stage, challenges will not be encountered in future before and after elections.

Civic Dispositions

Another theme which loomed large in the participants' narratives of the content of voter education in Civic Education was dispositions. This category of students associated civic disposition exclusively with political activity, primarily with taking part in elections.

Furthermore, P3 revealed that:

Civic education offers Civic dispositions which is part of voter education. Civic dispositions, develop slowly over time and as a result of what one learns and experiences in the home, school, community, and organizations of civil society. These experiences engender understanding that democracy requires the responsible self-governance of each individual; one cannot exist without the other. Traits of private character such as moral responsibility, self-discipline, and respect for the worth and human dignity of every individual are imperative. Traits of public character are no less consequential. Such traits as public spiritedness, civility, respect for the rule of law, critical mindedness, and willingness to listen, negotiate, and compromise are indispensable to democracy's success.

It was further revealed that civic dispositions contribute to the political efficacy of the individual and healthy functioning of the political system. It also brings about a sense of dignity and worth, and the common good. On the same question of whether there is voter education content in Civic Education in the school curriculum 15 teachers of Civic Education confirmed that Civic Education offer civic skills in young ones which are part of voter education. It was further agreed that Civic Education offers civic skills which are vital voter education Content. If citizens are to exercise their rights and discharge their responsibilities as members of self-governing communities, there is need to acquire relevant intellectual and participatory skills.

P9 further went on record to state that:

Intellectual skills in Civic Education and government are inseparable from voter education content. To be able to think critically about a political issue, for example, one must have an understanding of the issue, its history, its contemporary relevance, as well as command of a set of intellectual tools or considerations useful in dealing with such an issue.

Participants from NGOs and Political Parties pointed out that Civic Education has various voter education content in the school curriculum. They stressed that voter education content like teaching young ones how to become good citizens and leaders, how to participate in electing leaders and what their rights are as citizens are part of the civic education in the school curriculum. For example, P16 mentioned that: *“issues like low levels of citizens’ participation in the government’s activities and neglecting of certain groups in the society are tackled in civic education.* From this quotation, the researcher confirms that voter education content is there in civic education curriculum.

Furthermore, P17 had this to say:

Civic education is taught in schools, communities, labor unions, churches. The citizens are taught how to vote wisely, what rights they are entitled to, or how to resolve conflicts. Teaching civic education in schools is important because it instills civic knowledge to the students from an early age which is the very core of voter education.”

It was further shown that Civic Education is key in as far as voter education is concerned in school programs. It was mentioned that civic education instills civic knowledge to students which is vital in as far as voter education is concerned. Civic Education teachers instill civic knowledge to students which is essential for them to take part in democratic dispensation. Political Party Leaders and NGOs seem to agree on the fact that human rights have to be respected in a democratic country. This is a key feature in Civic Education and of vital importance in voter education. They further echoed that human rights are very essential in any democracy. Today the groups have equal civil rights. Through civic education, young ones are taught to respect the rights of all individuals regardless of the status, race, and tribe. They further agreed that Civic Education, enable members from all groups, including minorities to participate equally and voice their concerns.

The study found that voter education content that is in Civic Education in school curriculum is political knowledge and awareness. This is part of the civic education in school curriculum that is taught to every student in a democracy in order to mold them into responsible and enlightened citizens in future. For example, P23 stated that

Civic Education in school curriculum has political knowledge and awareness about various issues in the government, including the functions of the government, the

rights of citizens, the responsibilities of leaders, and the composition of the political organizations, among others. The citizens also get to know their civil rights and what to expect from the government which is the content of voter education.

The above quotation, indicates that civic education is a vital subject for good political dispensation if democracy is to thrive. And also the knowledge acquired in school through civic education enables youths to be actively engaged in political participation.

Overall, the findings revealed that voter education content is there in Civic education and is being taught in schools. What came out vividly is that the human rights, governance, political knowledge, civic skills, dispositions among many contents and topics on Elections. Civic Education encourages political participation among the citizens. It enlightens the citizens and empowers them to take part in political activities that shape their future. These include voting, attending government meetings, challenging injustices, and pressurizing their elected leaders to represent them effectively. They learn that they are not just passive but active participants in their own governance. It was revealed that Civic Education (CE) has Voter Education content as it empowers all the members to actively take part in the political activities. This includes the women and the minority groups. These citizens get enlightened on equal rights and therefore there is increased participation in the activities of the democracy by all the citizens regardless of their gender or race which is at the center of Voter Education. P28 added that,

“Students from the minority groups thought that civic engagement was for rich children because they felt discriminated. The CE in school curriculum is accommodating to the minorities as it is designed with the assumption that all students are equal.”

Thus, there is need to continue training, deploying and placing appropriately qualified civic education teachers at the right levels; and control and monitor enrolment from Grade 1 up to Grade 12 so that the right age and numbers of learners are found in one class for easy transmission of civic knowledge for young ones to participate fully in democracy.

Civic virtues: Unlike the previous two categories of participants, the students who described civic virtues under the thematic strand "virtues as the content of voter education found in civic education. They linked notion of active citizenship, such as freedom of speech and freedom of choice, respect for diversity and multiculturalism, viewing oneself as a global citizen rather than a

citizen of one specific country as part of voter education content part of CE. Thus, for learners they stressed that through civic virtues there is "a possibility to speak one's mind and to have a frank and open discussion without fear", took this notion one step further and defined civic engagement as global citizenship

"we live in a globalised and interconnected world, hence civic engagement is the acceptance of diverse opinions and different cultures, by accepting and respecting this divergence of views you become a global citizen". P7 responded.

4.3 Effect of Civic Education on Voter Turnout among Youths

Table 3: Thematic strands on the effect of CE on voter turnout

Political information Political Participation Political identity Radical thinkers
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Political Information

Participants were asked to state the effects of voter education on voter turnout among the youths. The study found that Civic Education increases individual's political information among youths, it brings about higher voter turnout. They stated that participants of Civic Education have been shown to have better knowledge about the basic features of the political system of their country, including the structure and function of democratic institutions, their basic political and civil rights, and the timing of elections. The civic education in the content makes the learners and the communities to have more information on how best they can choose a suitable client to lead them. The program gives some information on good character over leaders that can be trusted. It was further stated that civic education helps the learners and the communities to be analytical and critical on political issues that are concerned with the community. P 30 mentioned that:

The content provides the learners with information on how best they can participate in the political circle and what constitutes their participation in politics. The content motivates learners to keep on pushing till they reach

their goal in the political life ... Therefore there is need for massive investment in Civic Education from primary to secondary schools.

The researcher understood that CE leads to high voter turnout because it instills knowledge that pushes the youths to use the knowledge they acquired from school.

Social competency skills

The study also found that Civic Education provides citizens with social competency skills. P33 said that

“Civic education provides citizens with social competency skills (e.g. readiness to accept responsibility), allowing one to develop and make critical judgments during elections. These skills are beneficial as citizens are in a more informed position to comprehend their responsibilities. Additionally, civic education helps citizens understand their interests and interests of other groups. The more knowledge we attain, the more citizens connect and defend their interests. As such, through collective and active collaboration in political decision-making, citizens gain insight into the basic principles of democracy, empowering them to become engaged in politics, and citizens are in a better position to utilise the electoral system as a means to exercise their political will and their right to vote.”

Political Participation

It was further revealed that Civic Education has a positive effect on voter turnout as it equips the citizenry with information to participate in democratic processes. They stressed that democracy is sustained by informed, effective and responsible citizens. Civic Education is hence essential, as it equips the citizenry with information to participate in democratic processes, empowering citizens to go beyond being passive instruments of the state. Civic education on voter turnout has a significant effect as it enables one to be a conscious political player by providing a platform for the dissemination of information relating to the election process and facts. In doing so, civic education supports the development of political socialization, particularly formulation of political values and attitudes which in the long run leads to higher voter turnout.’

On the question regarding the relationship between Civic education and voter turnout in Kabwe Central Constituency, 5 political party leaders confirmed that there is a close relationship between

Civic Education and voter turnout as Civic Education promotes greater awareness amongst youth and students about the electoral process. It was said *“The content explains to the learners the electoral processes and the stages involved”* (P25).

P 27 further went on record and stated that

The content gives learners the opportunity to take part in the elections due to the fact that the content is rich in political issues. Political participation consists of activities that aim at influencing the structure of a government, the appointment of leaders and the policies they execute. These activities can have the goal of supporting the existing structures and politics or changing them and include active and passive actions, collective or individual, legal or illegal, support or pressure actions, by which one or several persons try to influence the type of government in a society, how the state is led, or specific government decisions affecting a community or their individual members are made.

On the contrary, some political party leaders had different views with regards to the effect of civic education on voter turnout. They echoed a very different perspective as they stressed that civic education in Zambian schools focuses on rote memorization and testing of political knowledge which cannot improve youth voter turnout as intended. Traditional civic education that emphasizes students’ political knowledge through rote memorization and standardized tests does not seem to be promising in terms of improving consequential civic engagement outcomes amongst youth, especially voter turnout. In the same vein, the leaders gave a practical approach to Civic Education that has the potential of improving voter turnout during elections. Providing students with opportunities to really engage with what leadership means, having discussions and debates with leaders and politicians, mock elections those are all more practical ways to bring this idea of civic participation and civic knowledge to life.

Political Identity

The learners that participated in FGD in regard to the effect of Civic Education on voter turnout among the youths during elections reported that Civic Education contributes to the political identity among youths during elections. Most of the learners were of the view that civic education programmes do contribute to the development of a democratic political culture amongst participants. These programmes have been found to significantly increase individuals' political information, feelings of empowerment, and levels of political participation and the sense of belonging to the political party of choice. For instance, P38 said that:

I loved these lessons, because in each one of them, I felt that I understood, where I was in terms of the political sides and to which political party I was attached.

Further, following the Civic Education program, learners see the potential in the civil actions and see the expression of the theoretical term “political participation” in democracy that has been taught in civics lessons. For instance, P40 mentioned that:

After the lessons in citizenship studies, I understood the utmost importance of political and social involvement which starts in the elections. I have never understood why people say that elections are a right and not a duty. Today I cannot even think of the possibility to lose the chance of going to vote.

From the above quotation, it can be noted that Civic Education is seen to be an enlightenment, in that learners understand that it becomes their duty to take part in the political affairs of the country and the knowledge acquired become key to their participation in electing their leaders which they see to be a civic duty to them.

Radical thinkers

Furthermore, on the question regarding the effect of Civic Education on voter turnout during the elections, 10 Civic Education teachers that were interviewed reported that Civic Education makes the learners to be radical thinkers thereby being able to take part in politics thus, increasing voter turnout. According to them, individuals who engaged in face-to-face Civic Education are

significantly more participatory at the local level, more knowledgeable about politics, more aware of how to defend their rights and more informed about constitutional issues and the desirability of public involvement in the constitutional review process. They explained that they were positive in that they have led to an improvement in the participation in voting process. For example, P14 mentioned that;

“It makes learners to be radical thinkers and this aspect helps the learners to know who to vote for based on the character.”

Additionally, Civic Education teachers reported that CE has the potential of bringing about high voter turnout. This is seen in that Civic Education promote participation on the part of citizens plays a key role in the sustenance of democracy. It is not only their right, but it is their duty. Thus, in a democratic civic culture people or citizen participation may take many forms including standing for election, voting in elections, becoming informed, debating issues, attending community or civic meetings, being members of private voluntary organizations, paying taxes, and even protesting which has the capacity to increase voter turnout.

Conclusively, civic education helps the youths to take part in elections by making sure that they vote their candidate of their choice. It also brings awareness of values of democracy to be respected by different political parties. Civic education helps to explain the importance of taking part in a democratic way.

4.4 Factors that can foster High Voter Turnout during Elections among Youths

The study found out a range of influential factors which have grouped in different categories, including but not limited to party affiliation, candidate characteristics, policy positions, socioeconomic factors, social influence, and media impact. Each of these factors plays a distinct role in shaping voter preferences, attitudes, and ultimately, the choices made in the voting booth thereby leading to higher voter turnout. Moreover, socioeconomic factors, such as economic conditions and demographic characteristics, have been found to shape voter turnout.

Unemployment

On the question regarding the factors that foster voter turnout among youths, Civic Education teachers, NGOs and political party leaders had a similar view that unemployment trigger many youths to take part in the voting process that will in turn increase voter turnout. They stated that when youths are not employed, they become frustrated that they just expect to change the government of the day. When elections come, they register in large numbers and wake up early in the morning to cast their votes to change the government. P 34 said that:

A lot of my fellow youths are forced to go and vote due to the aspect of high levels of unemployment, many are the times the government do not listen to us and its only election time that we can make the right decision by participating in voting.

Similarly, other participants explained that the voice of the youths through voting is evident through 2021 general election in Zambia. A lot of youths are unemployed, therefore during elections it's the only time that they are given the opportunity to vote and change leadership. In this vein, P44 was recorded and said that:

Lack of employment is what makes youths to change governments. For example, in the previous elections of 2021, youths were voting in order to change the government with hope to have more job opportunities.

Corruption

From the interviews conducted, it was revealed that corruption trigger the youths to take part in politics either by voting or by seeking a public office. It was said that democracies seek to prevent any elected official or group of people from misusing or abusing their power such as corruption. Corruption occurs when government officials use public funds for their own benefit or exercise power in an illegal manner. Various methods have been used in different countries to protect against these abuses. Frequently the government is structured to limit the powers of the branches of government, to have independent courts and agencies with power to act against any illegal action by an elected official or branch of government, to allow for citizen participation and elections; and

to check for police abuse of power. However, when corruption is endemic in the country, the youths gets frustrated thereby forcing themselves to take part in an election. This trigger high voter turnout. P23 revealed that:

Corruption is like a cancer that makes a lot of youths to suffer the consequences due to selfishness's being exhibited by the politicians. This act makes youths to vote against such leaders in numbers.

It was mentioned that corruption in our society has become the order of the day and the only way we can get rid of it is through voting in large numbers. Similarly, some participants revealed that Corruption activities have made a lot of youths to suffer this is because the resources meant for the society are only shared among the old politicians and the only way to get rid of such is through voting.

Social media

Participants also explained that social media has brought a number of positive changes in the world inclusive of the voter turnout. Learners and community members are able to follow electoral trends around the world and be able to significantly change to suit the new development. For example, P35 said that:

Social media since 2010 has been a game changer among the youths in terms of educating them on the importance of voting in large numbers. Social media is the greatest factor amongst the youths. 2021 general election is the best example that made a lot of youths throughout the country to vote in large number for them to make the needed change.

The study further indicated that income levels of the citizens had a higher potential of making citizens to take part in an election thereby triggering high voter turnout. It was revealed that income can be a significant factor influencing individuals' voting decisions. This is in the sense that some civil servants expect salary increment when they work for a long time or when they realize that the services offered are more than the incentives or payments. Participants echoed that there is a

positive correlation between income levels and political participation, including voting. It was further mentioned that “*lower-income individuals tend to be more politically engaged and more likely to vote compared to those with high-income which in turn lead to higher voter turnout*”. P24 said.

Political ideology

The study found that political ideology lead to higher turnout. These ideologies often align with specific political parties or movements. Political leanings, whether tilting conservative or liberal, play a substantial role in guiding electoral choices. These leanings act as a bridge, linking voters to candidates that reflect their intrinsic values and policy inclinations. *Those aligned with conservative values typically emphasize societal order, the importance of a laissez-faire economic stance and a strong national defense, leading them to side with candidates who vocalize these priorities.* In contrast, liberal-minded voters usually champion societal progression, economic regulation, and a wider embrace of inclusivity, driving their support toward candidates with these viewpoints. In conclusion, political ideology serves as a significant predictor of voting decisions. Understanding an individual’s ideological stance provides insights into their policy preferences and the political parties or candidates they are likely to support.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study which are in themes. This study was guided by the three objectives to explore the voter education content in Civic Education programs in school curriculum, to determine the effect of Civic Education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths and to examine factors that can foster high voter turnout during elections among youths through school and community based Civic education. The findings revealed that Voter Education is part of Civic Education curriculum and that it has great effect on voter turnout. It was further stated that some of the factors that enhance voter turnout include: unemployment and social media influence and corruption.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the findings presented in chapter four. The discussion is done in accordance with the objectives of this study.

5.1 The Voter Education Content in Civic Education in School Curriculum

The findings of this study underscores that voter education content is indeed found in the Civic Education school curriculum. This was arrived at following many respondents echoing that Voter Education is part of Civic Education. They stressed that Civic Education has the component that talks about the rights and responsibilities of the citizens. The findings further showed that CE provides citizens with knowledge about their rights and how to protect them, their responsibilities and how to carry them out effectively. Civic Education is therefore a continuous lifelong education, and not only about elections. It can be stressed that the findings of this study are in line with what Vasiljevic (2019), asserted that civic education gives a platform for learning one's rights before engaged into participation. Thus, it can be deduced that CE has the content of Voter Education as it provides voters with knowledge and information on their rights and responsibilities during an election.

Additionally, it has been established from this study that CE in school curriculum has a concept of democracy: its meaning, values, principles and types. The respondents also asserted that CE discusses the importance of democracy and explores how people participate in making important decisions on how public affairs should be handled. From the findings given above, it is clear that voter education content is part of the CE school curriculum. This is in the sense that CE in school curriculum as found out from this study emphasize on the democratic core values and principles which are the necessity of conducting voter education. The findings of this study are in agreement with the findings of Kahne (2015) who found that CE is the provision of information and learning experiences to equip and empower citizens to participate in democratic processes. It can be generalized that indeed voter education content is part of the CE school curriculum as the main objective of Voter Education is to increase participants' knowledge of democracy and citizen participation in elections.

Provision of political knowledge also came out from this study as part of the Voter Education content that is part of Civic Education school curriculum. Findings from almost all the participants in this study pointed out that civic education in schools provides the learners with the political knowledge which is vital for them to function in society. The results from FGD for instance echoed that civic education provides learners with the necessary knowledge to take part in politics. It should be stressed that these findings are in concord with the findings from Gomez (2012) as cited by Muleya (2019), which revealed that civic education has the ability to sharpen critical thinking capacity of young people, which is important in the analysis of political, social and cultural issues as well as preparing them for the roles and responsibilities and for the challenges or uncertainties of life through providing relevant education. It should be stated that such knowledge is part of the Voter Education.

Furthermore, the findings of this study established that participation as the content of voter education is part of the CE content in school curriculum. Almost all the respondents were of the view that for democracy to work effectively, citizens must have the opportunity to take part in decision making processes. This is the basis of democracy. Moreover, citizens develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes which strengthen democracy through their participation. By interacting with others, individuals can, for example, become tolerant of people who hold different views from their own. At community level, people who participate in community activities also develop a sense of their own individual worth and an increased sense of being part of the community. These findings are in line with the findings of Mahafza (2014 as cited by Ngozwana 2017) who asserted that Civic Education in a democratic society should focus on self-government and therefore has to promote people's understandings of democracy ethics and the rational obligations towards the values and principles of democracy. It has to be attested to the fact that such knowledge is part of the voter education.

5.2 The Effect of Civic Education on enhancing Voter Turnout among the Youths

Development of civic attitudes, norms, values, and behaviors

The findings showed that CE plays an important role in the development of civic attitudes, norms, values, and behaviors which are essential for voter turnout. A seminal study by Langton and Jennings (1968) traced the rise and implementation of civics courses in the United States dating

back to 1915. The study employed a national probability sample to evaluate the impact American government and civics courses had on youth political orientations. Their findings suggested that such coursework led to little, if any, increase in youth civic engagement or political participation. This work, in conjunction with other studies that provided mixed support at best for the notion that schools influence the development of civic orientations.

Promotion of citizen involvement

The findings of this study also revealed that Civic Education plays an important role in promoting citizen involvement in all aspects of a democratic society. They stressed that citizens who are equipped with civic knowledge will be able to participate effectively in the affairs of the nation. The participants of this study equated Civic Education to a social science, which deals with all aspects of human life and environment and therefore, helps the citizens to make choices. They argued that CE should be taught realistically for it to address the central facts about political as well as governance processes. They further echoed that CE is a tool in the promotion of democracy in developing nations. Without CE, it is difficult to implement the tenets of democracy. It may be seen in this study that the findings of this study are in line with the findings of Niworo et-al (2016) who also conducted a similar study and found out that civic education in the study area had high level of political participation, including the readiness to vote, join political party, contest elections, participate in community service and demanding accountability from duty bearers. Thus, it can be generalized that CE has a positive effect on voter turnout. However, stake holders involved in teaching CE at all levels should be practical and promote citizen involvement in local and central governance.

Political participation

Further, the findings showed that CE encourages political participation among the youths which is key to voter turnout. The participants of this study had said that democracy and representative government depend on participation to ensure sound decision making, popular support for programs and initiatives and accountability when rights are violated. They said that individuals decide whether they want to participate, but everyone must have equal access to the opportunity to participate. They also stressed that civic involvement can take many forms, many of them protected by human rights. People have the right to participate in government, either directly by holding public office or through representatives chosen in regular elections. This right not only

prohibits interference with voting, it also requires the government to take active steps to ensure that everyone who is entitled to vote is able to do so. A study conducted by Civics Education Initiative, (2017) had a similar perspective on this issue, it stressed that political knowledge gained through preparation for and participation in Civic Education may boost voter participation by reducing the informational cost of voting and this political knowledge, in turn, may translate to higher voter participation.

Skills Acquisition

Considering the Participatory Theory, the idea of voter education in Civic Education is a global desire because it offers opportunities to the citizens to acquire skills needed for their full participation, which later get yield to development of any given nation (FODEP, 2019). This theory is anchored on the idea that the people's political participation is the basic principle of democracy, which also denotes the active involvement of individuals and groups in the governmental processes affecting their lives (Bhagban, 2011). Participatory Theory suggests that citizens must take part in voting so that they can facilitate development. However, some registered voters may not know the objective of Voting, their Rights to Voting, Time of Voting and Venue of Election. All this entails that there is a great relationship between civic education and voter turnout. The more educated individuals are, the more they are likely to vote. The sad part is that some voters are moved with emotions. They do not analyze the manifesto of presidential candidates. In most cases, their sole aim is to change the government without proper analysis of other political affairs. Therefore, as the findings of this research have revealed, it is necessary to close the disparity between civic education and voter turnout through sensitization of the masses.

Respect for the core values of Democracy

It was further revealed that Civic Education had a positive influence on voter turnout as it brings about the core values and principles of democracy to be respected by different political parties in Kabwe central constituency. They testified that through CE, people tend to know their rights and what they ought to do as citizens of the country. They went further and said, civic knowledge has brought the change of behavior in Zambian politics. They attributed this change of behaviour to the existence of CE. They testified that CE guides on what is normal in a given community or country. Similarly, National Council for the Social Studies, (2018) argued that Civic Education is expected to prepare students to be responsible and participatory citizens by teaching them political

knowledge, values, and skills. As reported in this study, civic knowledge promotes support for democratic core values and political influence. Thus, from the findings of this study, people who are more knowledgeable in civic issues are more likely to take part in civic and political affairs as well as less likely to have a generalized mistrust and fear of public life which in turn leads to higher voter turnout.

Teaching on the importance of voting

Civic Education provides explicit instruction to ordinary citizens about democratic institutions on importance of voting, values, and procedures. They include voter education programs, programs that provide instruction about the social and political rights of women, neighborhood problem-solving programs that bring individuals in contact with local authorities and promote local collective action, programs combatting election violence and vote-buying, and programs promoting tolerance and the peaceful resolution of political disputes in post-conflict settings. As discovered from the findings of this study, CE make the learners to be radical thinkers. The participants of this study reported that Civic Education seeks to give citizens the understanding and the habit of engaging in such a nonviolent contest to participate constructively in politics and, more broadly, civic life and service to the community. Such as education, then, can help stabilize societies affected by violence and should be seen as an important positive feature of a post conflict landscape. This was exactly the same view with Blais et al (2016) who expressed that Civic education does not only relate to political, social and cultures aspects but it is a subject that has potential to instill awareness which later brings about sustainable development when the youths get involved in the governance of the country.

According to Vasiljevic (2019), the good citizen is the one who is equipped with appropriate knowledge, skills and traits of character which are instrumental for the good of the public. The above citation is exactly what this study revealed that the ultimate purpose of Civic Education is creating a good citizen who has an intellectual capacity to critically analyze ideas, who actively participates in civic life (including political life), has an admirable character, and who genuinely cares about the wellbeing of other citizens. The participants of this study espoused that the whole idea is that Civic and Ethical Education makes citizens active participants and thereby vital assets for the peace, development and democratic governance of a country.

Political Identity

The findings revealed that Civic Education Program contributes to the political identity of most of the students. From the students' voices, School in Zambia is conceived as a place of personal growth and of the development of the political identity of young people. Schools provide social opinions and through them the teenagers consolidate their political opinions. This can also be supported by Hern (2018) who shows in her comparative study among six countries that students in school whose teachers provide civic education contents aged 15–19years appear to be more interested in the political arena than in those contexts in which they do not have such experiences. This is exactly what this study has found out that Civic Education Programmes were significant instruments for increasing individuals' political information, feelings of empowerment and levels of political participation in Kabwe Central Constituency. It was found that the impact of CE exposure on these orientations was still evident nearly a year and a half after the programme ended. It was also found that programmes can be effective even in contexts characterized by heightened levels of political and social conflict.

The study showed that the programs ensure that voters are motivated and prepared to exercise their voting and political will by voting during elections. If voters are not prepared or motivated to participate in the electoral process, then questions may begin to arise about the legitimacy, representativeness and responsiveness of elected leaders and institutions and avails citizens with voting information that shows them the advantages and disadvantages of voting. The pride of any democratically elected government is enhanced when the voter turnout grows close to 100%. The findings showed that the programs promote greater awareness amongst youth and students about the electoral process. It further seeks their assistance in facilitating voter registration.

Promotion of Zeal and energy to participate

The study showed that civic education gives learners the zeal and energy to participate in the voting process. Nevertheless, there is usually less Voter Education Program to prepare and encourage people to go and vote. For instance, Weinschenk et.al (2022) affirm that there is very little, if any, civic and voter education in between elections yet continuous civic education is vital in the concerted efforts to promote active citizenship necessary for the people to meaningfully engage with the political process. The challenges of Voter Education Program show that the success of the programme can help prevent apathy and promote democratic elections. The impact of Voter

education program can only be measured against the rise of voter turnout. Civil Society Organisations and the Electoral Commission of Zambia should therefore, increase their efforts and make deliberate efforts to ensure that youths and those that are marginalised receive the Programme repeatedly. This will help enhance democracy in Zambia as more people will vote as informed citizens.

5.3 Factors that can foster High Voter Turnout during Elections among Youths

The political expectation is that every citizen must take part in decision making. Voting is part of decision making process in that the nation is deciding on who should rule the country. Unfortunately, there is a discrepancy between registered voters and voter turnout. For example, in 2021 only 34 505 people voted against a total of 66 497 registered voters (ECZ 2021). The concern however lies on what factors can foster high voter turnout during elections. The findings of this study revealed a number of factors.

Unemployment

The study findings showed that unemployment is one of the major factors that heavily contributes on the voter turnout among the youths. Many participants of this study espoused that unemployment prompt many youths to take part in the voting process that will in turn increase voter turnout. They stated that when youths are not employed, they become frustrated that they just expect to change the government of the day. When elections come, they register in large numbers and wake up early in the morning to cast their votes to change the government. This is line with Cebula, (2008) and Wichowsky (2018) who observed that youth unemployment has been one of the greatest challenge throughout the country and around the world. The study findings showed that any politician who promises youths employment with tenable policies, the youths will turnout in large numbers to go and vote for such a candidate. In my view, it can be noted from the literature that unemployment can lead to higher voter turnout in most developing countries unlike in the western world. This is due to political leaders not showing much interest in the human resource which leads to unemployment.

Corruption

From the interviews conducted it was revealed that corruption trigger the youths to take part in politics either by voting or by seeking a public office. It was further explained that democracies seek to prevent any elected official or group of people from misusing or abusing their power such as corruption. Corruption occurs when government officials use public funds for their own benefit or exercise power in an illegal manner. Frequently the government is structured to limit the powers of the branches of government, to have independent courts and agencies with power to act against any illegal action by an elected official or branch of government, to allow for citizen participation and elections; and to check for police abuse of power. However, when corruption is endemic in the country, the youths gets frustrated thereby forcing themselves to take part in an election. This trigger high voter turnout. Just like the findings of Niworo et-al (2016) which postulated that some electors demand accountability from duty bearers. Participants' argument was that sensitive voters become angry and vote informally on grounds that any government formed on corrupt principles does not put the plight of the general citizenry at the centre stage. Thus there are some voters in Zambia who feel marginalised in the governance issues in that resources are seemingly shared amongst those in power, contrary to campaign promises candidates table before the electors during the run up to an election.

Much as some voters may be well equipped with information on acceptable voting marks and requirements, some voters go to the polls to cast informal votes with a view to protesting against unresolved issues between them and their representatives. On this finding, my argument is that, much as citizens would wish to punish some corrupt and selfish representatives for their actions in public office, they are not aware that invalidating their votes does in a way create room for the same candidate to win back the seat as others may be in support of him or her. This study argues that such informal voters are not aware that casting invalid votes may not be the best solution in that they decide not to vote for another candidate since they remain mute on who should hold office. Should a candidate they wished to lose an election to his opponent win back the seat? he or she will continue making decisions which will affect voters in their daily lives. Moreover, voting informally may give a corrupt candidate a platform to continue with his or her corrupt behaviour in public office in an event that he wins an election. In light of the identified political knowledge gaps, Mahajan (2009) argument that for citizens to participate effectively in the electoral process,

they need to be adequately educated. Thus, when citizens lack necessary knowledge and skills, participation becomes much more of a challenge.

The finding revealed voter turnout increases consistently and significantly as the voter's level of education goes up. Another apparent trend shown by the study is that, in recent years, while the participation rate is generally on a downward trajectory across all education levels, lesser educated groups lose interest in the democratic process more than the other groups. In line Finkel, (2020) found that exposure to the Civic Education had significant effects on political knowledge and awareness of various kinds in terms of local level political participation of citizens in these countries. Therefore, as this trend is likely to continue, which increases voting rate disparity, education level can be considered a stronger factor impacting voter turnout of the future generations.

Social Media

The findings in the study conducted by Pew Research Politics (2018) entails that Social media has been found to be a key feature that allows people to gather and share opinions on politics, among other topics, as well as to attack opposing views. It is believed that social media platforms could have a hand in growing political polarization. They reported that the use of social media not only widens the audience and the scope of the election, but also lets people feel more comfortable fighting and arguing with others virtually as opposed to in person. As a result, social media platforms provide a way for people to become more contrasted and increasingly contentious. Although this can often be toxic and destructive, it can spur people emotionally into action and going out to vote. According to the results of a randomized controlled trial of political messages on Facebook, the social network platform is believed to be effective in online political mobilization and, subsequently, lifting voter turnout in the elections. Reports from FGD showed that since around 2010, more and more politicians, civic groups, and government organizations have started to use digital strategies to campaign for their causes, hoping to energize their bases to show up in elections.

Through social media, citizens are equipped with Civic skills. Civic skills are important because they include knowledge, abilities and attitudes that people need to be able to take an active role in society and to be engaged citizens (Mainde and Chola, 2020). Pew Research Politics, (2018) illustrates how their studies have shown that people's use of social media, especially political and

civic engagement, and has a positive impact on voting behavior. This is true for teenagers' especially young adults who are constantly exposed to social media. Additionally, social media is a technology platform with wide reach and influence that allows people to create and share their opinions on politics and other issues despite opposition virtually. What came out also in the study is that social media is already common in current society, but it is notably more prevalent in young people's lives. With much higher access to and more time spent on social network apps by the current and future young voters, social media will just become a substantially more impactful factor to voter turnout. Up until the turn of the 21st century, traditional media was one of the most used tools in reaching out to voters. However, nowadays, the ability to reach young voters via these platforms is essentially very limited. As the current youth eventually grow to be a major portion of the voting population in the next several decades, social media may become as common in political activities as traditional media, if not more.

Campaign Strategies

Most respondents reported that campaign strategies play a crucial role in shaping voting decisions. Political candidates and their campaigns employ various tactics and strategies to communicate their message, mobilize supporters, and persuade undecided voters. These strategies can influence voters' perceptions, attitudes, and ultimately their decision to support a particular candidate. Effective communication is a fundamental aspect of campaign strategies. Candidates use various channels such as campaign speeches, debates, advertisements, social media, and direct voter outreach to convey their message and policy positions.

Political Ideology

Political ideology refers to a set of beliefs, values, and principles that shape one's views on social, economic, and political issues. These ideologies often align with specific political parties or movements. Political leanings, whether tilting conservative or liberal, play a substantial role in guiding electoral choices. These leanings act as a bridge, linking voters to candidates that reflect their intrinsic values and policy inclinations. Those aligned with conservative values typically emphasize societal order, the importance of a laissez-faire economic stance, and a strong national defense, leading them to side with candidates who vocalize these priorities. In contrast, liberal-minded voters usually champion societal progression, economic regulation, and a wider embrace of inclusivity, driving their support toward candidates with these viewpoints (Mason 2018). In

conclusion, political ideology serves as a significant predictor of voting decisions. Understanding an individual's ideological stance provides insights into their policy preferences and the political parties or candidates they are likely to support.

The study clearly came up with some of the strategies that can be used to promote Citizen Involvement in elections. Among the factors was provision of civic education at all levels. As already stated above the provision of civic education can play a vital role in enhancing citizen involvement in local governance, this is because civic education assumes the personal, political, and economic responsibilities of a citizen. These responsibilities include taking care of one's self, supporting one's family and caring for, nurturing, and educating one's children. They also include being informed about public issues, voting, paying taxes, serving on juries, performing public service, and serving in leadership positions commensurate with one's talents.

Civic Education

Civic education is an important factor that determines voter turnout. Through Civic education, people are taught how to vote. How to vote is a serious matter to reckon. Some votes are rendered invalid because some voters do not have an idea of how to vote. For example, when voting, voters need to mark X on the candidates of their choice. Some voters leave the ballot paper blank and others end up marking X on a wrong person thinking that they are voting the person out. This study leaves much to be desired. Voter Education is very important where voter turnout is concerned. By definition Campbell, (2016) voter education is the process by which citizens are educated and empowered to clearly understand their rights and responsibilities in electoral processes and how they can vote. This key issue in this definition is "clearly understanding", this means that Civic Education should focus on making citizens understand clearly their rights and responsibilities in electoral processes and how they can vote. In promoting civic education, it is important to use formal and informal ways so that citizens are sensitized effectively, Formal instruction in civics and governance should provide a basic and realistic understanding of civic life, politics, and government. It should familiarize students with the constitutions of Zambia and the state in which they live, because these and other core documents are the criteria which can be used to judge the means and ends of government. It should also emphasize the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional democracy.

Healthcare Experiences

The findings of this study showed that the significance of healthcare as an integral part of human welfare fundamentally impacts voters' decision-making processes. Many respondents reported that Voters' personal encounters with the healthcare system, whether satisfying or disappointing, and their perception of the system's overall performance hold considerable sway over their voting choices. Research by Haselswerdt (2018) highlighted that individuals' personal experiences with healthcare can guide their voting choices. Experiences that meet or exceed expectations can solidify support for the current system or incumbent politicians, whereas subpar experiences can stimulate a call for change, prompting voters to lean against the existing political order. Moreover, Gollust and Rahn (2019) discovered that personal health crises, such as severe illnesses or accidents, can substantially realign voters' priorities. In these situations, voters tended to assign a greater weight to healthcare policies when casting their votes. This phenomenon was found to be valid even among voters who previously did not view healthcare policies as a decisive factor in their voting decisions.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the findings which were presented in chapter four. The findings revealed that the content contained in civic education is enough to impart political, social knowledge that would turn a learner into a responsible citizen. The effect of civic education is seen to influence learners and other people to participate in political affairs at community and national level. Through social media, many people are influenced into voting out the governments which are deemed to have no developmental agenda for the country.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

In this chapter, the conclusion and recommendations of the entire study is given. The chapter presents the major findings of the study by way of drawing some broad conclusions on each of the statements that were guiding the study.

6.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Civic Education and voter turnout among the youths in Kabwe Central Constituency of Central province. The study established that the Voter Education content is indeed found in Civic Education programs in school curriculum. This was arrived at following many respondents echoing that Voter Education is part of Civic Education. They stressed that Civic Education has the component that talks about the rights and responsibilities of the citizens.

The study further revealed that Civic Education contributes to the political identity of most of the students. The findings showed that Civic Education Programs were significant instruments for increasing individuals' political information, feelings of empowerment and levels of political participation. The study also showed that the programs ensure that voters are motivated and prepared to exercise their voting and political will by voting during elections. Further, the findings showed that Civic Education plays an important role in the development of civic attitudes, norms, values, and behaviors.

Study findings furthermore showed that unemployment is one of the major factor that heavily contributes to the voter turnout among the youths. This study also established that some electors are very much aware and sensitive to corruption activities taking place amongst politicians. The findings revealed that one of the factors that contributes among the youths to turnout in numbers to and vote is existence of political will among the politicians. The findings revealed that social media as an increasingly widespread and wide-reaching technology platform, and it allows people to gather and share opinions on politics, among other topics, as well as to attack opposing views. It is believed that social media platforms could have a hand in growing political polarization.

Conclusively, it was found that there is indeed a relationship between Civic education and voter turnout.

6.2 Recommendations

1. Different stakeholders should join hands in supporting the government and Civil Society Organizations in providing Civic Education
2. Colleges and University programs should strengthen the civic dimensions of pre-service and in-service education for teachers and administrators. Those who are already working in schools should also be offered the opportunity to acquire continuing education credits related to Civic Education so that they can become more skilled at inculcating the civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes students need to become responsible and engaged citizens
3. Ministry of Education must prioritize and make the teaching of Civic Education compulsory from Pre-School to University level if we are see positive social change and transformation of a democratic society.

6.3 Areas for Further Research

1. Pedagogical approaches that can foster higher voter turnout
2. The use of service learning approach to increase voter turnout
3. Assess voter education in schools for a better democracy

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APPENDICES

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

APPNDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ECZ OFFICIALS

Dear participant,

Ensure that you are free by taking part in this interview, which should not take more an hour. I would like you to share what you know about the relationship between voter education and electoral turnout among the youths of Kabwe District. I would be very grateful if you could feel free to respond to the questions to the best of your knowledge. Be assured that the information you are providing will be treated with utmost confidentiality and kept with privacy.

QUESTIONS

1. What is Civic Education?
2. Have you ever been provided with Civic Education information?
3. How is the content of Civic Education?
4. Are there components of voter education in Civic Education?
5. If yes to question 2, how do you see the content of voter education in civic education?
6. Is civic education doing enough to increase voter turnout?
7. Do you think Civic Education is important to increase voter turnout? If yes explain
8. Do you participate in voting during elections?
9. Do you think voter education make people to vote in big numbers? If yes, explain
10. How has been the voter education content in Civic education programmes in school curriculum?
11. How effective is Civic education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths?
12. What are some of the factors that can be used to foster high voter turnout during elections among youths through school and community based Civic education?

Thank you very much for your time!

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR NGOS

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at the University of Zambia carrying out a research to examine the relationship between Civic education and voter turnout among the youths in Kabwe District of Central Province.

I sincerely appeal for your cooperation. The information you will give shall be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality.

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer all the questions to the best of your knowledge

1. Do not write your name
2. To answer the questions tick in the box [v] or write in the spaces provided.

Please tick the appropriate choice and fill in the spaces provided.

1. Sex

Male []

Female []

2. Age-----

years

3. Marital Status

Single []

Married []

4. Have you ever been provided with Civic Education?

Yes []

No []

5. If yes to question 4, how often are you provided with Civic education?

a) Monthly []

b) Yearly []

c) Just before Elections

d) Specify-----

6. How often would you want voter education to be provided to you?

7. In which language is mostly Civic Education provided to you? -----

8. Do you easily understand the civic education provided to you?

Yes []

No []

9. Do you think civic education is important to the citizens?

Yes []

No []

If yes, explain-----

10. Which organizations or who provides civic education in your area?

11. Do you participate in voting during elections?

Yes []

No []

12. Do you think civic education make people to vote in big numbers?

Yes [] No []

If yes, explain -----

13. How has been the voter education content in Civic education programmes in school curriculum?

14. How effective is Civic education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths?

15. What are some of the factors that can be used to foster high voter turnout during elections among youths through school and community based Civic education?

Thank you very much for your cooperation and please be assured that this information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS

1. What is your comment about Civic Education content and the influence on voter turnout?
2. In your understanding is Civic Education important to voter turnout?
3. What is the role knowledge of Civic Education that can lead to higher voter turnout?
4. How effective is Civic education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths?
5. What are some of the factors that can be used to foster high voter turnout during elections among youths through school and community based Civic education?

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR YOUTHS

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at the University of Zambia carrying out a research to examine the relationship between Civic education and voter turnout among the youths in Kabwe District of Central Province.

I sincerely appeal for your cooperation. The information you will give shall be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality.

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer all the questions to the best of your knowledge

3. Do not write your name
4. To answer the questions tick in the box [v] or write in the spaces provided.

Please tick the appropriate choice and fill in the spaces provided.

3. Sex

Male []

Female []

4. Age-----

years

3. Marital Status

Single []

Married []

6. Have you ever been provided with Civic Education?

Yes []

No []

7. If yes to question 4, how often are you provided with Civic education?

a) Monthly []

e) Yearly []

f) Just before Elections

g) Specify-----

16. How often would you want voter education to be provided to you?

17. In which language is mostly Civic Education provided to you? -----

18. Do you easily understand the civic education provided to you?

Yes []

No []

19. Do you think civic education is important to the citizens?

Yes []

No []

If yes, explain-----

20. Which organizations or who provides civic education in your area?

21. Do you participate in voting during elections?

Yes []

No []

22. Do you think civic education make people to vote in big numbers?

Yes [] No []

If yes, explain -----

23. How has been the voter education content in Civic education programmes in school curriculum?

24. How effective is Civic education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths?

25. What are some of the factors that can be used to foster high voter turnout during elections among youths through school and community based Civic education?

Thank you very much for your cooperation and please be assured that this information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS

Ensure that you are free by taking part in this interview, which should not take more an hour. I would like you to share what you know about the relationship between voter education and electoral turnout among the youths of Kabwe District. I would be very grateful if you could feel free to respond to the questions to the best of your knowledge. Be assured that the information you are providing will be treated with utmost confidentiality and kept with privacy.

QUESTIONS

1. What is Civic Education?
2. Have you ever been provided with Civic Education information?
3. How is the content of Civic Education?
4. Are there components of voter education in Civic Education?
5. If yes to question 2, how do you see the content of voter education in civic education?
6. Is civic education doing enough to increase voter turnout?
7. Do you think Civic Education is important to increase voter turnout? If yes explain
8. Do you participate in voting during elections?
9. Do you think voter education make people to vote in big numbers? If yes, explain
10. How has been the voter education content in Civic education programmes in school curriculum?
11. How effective is Civic education on enhancing voter turnout among the youths?
12. What are some of the factors that can be used to foster high voter turnout during elections among youths through school and community based Civic education?

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION TEACHERS

1. What is your comment on civic education and its influence on voter turnout in Kabwe Central Constituency?

2. Do you think there is voter education content in the civic education school curriculum?

Yes ()

No ()

If yes to question 2

explain.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Do you think civic education has significant influence on voter turnout?

4. Of what relevance is civic education on voter turnout?

5. In your own understanding, how do you think voter turnout is influenced by civic education?

6. How does training strategies influence voter turnout during elections?

7. What do you think are the factors that influence voter turnout during elections?

APPENDIX G: RESEARCH WORK PLAN

Presented below is a work plan for the study

Activity	NOV 2023	DEC 2023	JAN 2024	FEB 2024	MAR 2024	APR 2024	MAY 2024
Submission of Research Proposal							
Literature Review							
Research Instruments Designing							
Data Collection							
Chapter 4-5							
Final Draft Submission							

APPENDIX H: Budget

ACTIVITY	COST (ZMW)
Transport	400.00
Refreshments	250.00
Stationery	300.00
Printing	500.00
Binding	600.00
Internet Usage	800.00
Miscellaneous	200.00
Total	3,050.00

APPEDIX I: APPROVAL LETTER

All Communication should be addressed to
the District Education Board Secretary
TEL/FAX: 05 – 224702



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

In reply please quote:

No. **DEBSK 101/1/7**

DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD
P.O. BOX 80423
KABWE

15th April, 2024

To: The Headteacher
- Bwacha Secondary School
- Kabwe Secondary School
- Makululu Day Secondary School
- Don Bosco Makululu Secondary School
- Angelina Tembo Secondary School
- David Ramushu Secondary School
KABWE

**RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER: MS. TINENENJI BANDA- STUDENT NUMBER
21106049**

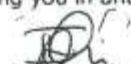
The above subject matter refers.

This serves to introduce Tinenenji Banda a Second (2nd) year Student at the University of Zambia Pursuing a Master of Education in Civic Education. The student has been permitted to carry out research on "**Examining the Relationship between Civic Education and Voter Turnout among the Youths during elections.**" A case study of Kabwe District in Central Province.

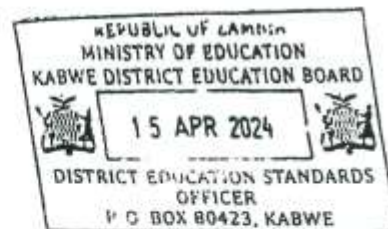
The data to be collected will be purely academic in nature.

Kindly attend to the student accordingly.

Thanking you in anticipation.

fw

Dr. Chrispin Maleya (PhD)
DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY
KABWE DISTRICT

Am



APPENDIX J: ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291
777 Fax: (+260)-211-290 258/253 952 | E-mail: director.drgs@unza.zm | Website:
www.unza.zm

APPROVAL OF STUDY

IORG No. 0005376

HSSREC IRB No. 00006464

4th September, 2023,

Ms. Tinenenji Banda,
University of Zambia,
School of Education.
Lusaka.

REF NO. HSSREC:-2023- JUN -044

Dear, Ms. Banda,

RE: “ EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIVIC EDUCATION AND VOTER TURNOUT AMONG THE YOUTHS DURING ELECTIONS: A STUDY OF KABWE DISTRICT IN CENTRAL PROVINCE ”

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

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC:-2023- JAN- 016
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 4 th September, 2023	Expiry Date: 3 rd September, 2024
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	3 rd September, 2024

Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	☐ English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

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

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

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

secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.

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

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

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

Yours faithfully,



Dr. J.I. Ziwa
DR. J. I. Ziwa

**ACTING CHAIRPERSON
THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

cc: Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Director (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Registrar (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies