

Curriculum-related barriers to teaching and learning about anti-corruption education in selected secondary schools, Zambia

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Abstract

This study explored the barriers to teaching and learning of anti-corruption education content in the Zambian education curriculum. It highlights these challenges and hindrances experienced in the process of developing, learning and teaching anti-corruption education content in Zambia. The study was based on analysing several teaching methods and content in the curriculum. To do this, the study brings to bare alteration to the curriculum compelled by changes in the governance systems from One Party State to Multi-Party system driven by free-market policies during the 1990s. It alludes to the lack of providing anti-corruption content in the educational curriculum at an early age to learners which weakens their moral edge to desist corruption later. The study is anchored on Macrae's game theory of 1982 providing a theoretical underpinning to the study. The game theory was used to provide a platform in explaining curriculum related barriers to the fight against corruption in the education sector. Qualitative research methodology was used because it gave a clear understanding of the participants' views, experiences and captured participants' perceptions as they occurred naturally. Data for the study was collected by conducting interviews with focused group discussions in classrooms in the selected secondary schools. Succinctly, participants were engaged qualitatively through interviews and focus group discussion for three (3) months. Equally, documentary analysis provided a technique for data collection. The study demonstrates a critical approach to analyse corruption persistence in the education by exploring it through professional impediments in secondary schools of Zambia. Nevertheless, this study identified and found out insufficient teaching and learning resources needed for anti-corruption education, the absence of teaching forums for teachers on anti-corruption education content and the delayed induction of learners into integrity education through the curriculum as hindrances to teaching and learning anti-corruption material. The study recommended a comprehensive stand-alone subject on integrity education in natural science subjects too.

Keywords: corruption, game theory, curriculum, governance, learners

Introduction

A curriculum is one of the most potent tools at the disposal of any level of education whenever there is need to bring about a paradigm shift on any matter that collectively affects a nation (Moonga et al., 2018; Wentzell, 2006). Unfortunately, in agreement with Lawes et al. (2007), pedagogic problems and content that influence official deliberations on the national curriculum, integral to education have become subordinate and susceptible to corruption due to social engineering and political expediency. For instance, various stakeholders and countries around the world now agree that one of the most effective and efficient means of curbing the scourge of corruption is through the institution of education and anti-graft, namely; the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the Transparency International against Corruption

(TIC) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Attempts have been made to implement such education-based measures against corruption using different approaches whose results have also tended to vary based on the approach used (Kirya, 2020; Nyaude, 2018). Curbing the vice of corruption requires multifaceted efforts targeted at both the supply and demand sides of it. One such effort is providing anti-corruption education at an early age to develop a strong moral compass for the young (Ministry of General Education, 2015; Nye, 1967; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2019; Stermole et al., 2019). Equally, according to Phiri et al. (2022), corruption in Zambia's education sector manifests in various ways such as through bribery or fraud, nepotism, embezzlement and

theft. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2019) cited in Fraillon et al. (2020, p. 45) state that “incorporating integrity education into school curriculum is a key tool, as it equips young people with the knowledge and skills needed to face the challenges of society, including corruption”. It must be realized that the young generation, students in particular, have a crucial role to play in turning around attitudes about corruption from passive acceptance to active resistance. Young people must be the main agents of change in every society’s quest to lay the correct foundation for integrity (Wong, 2018). Research has found out that Civic Education programs can increase the likelihood of young people rejecting corruption in government when they grow up and begin to take up decision-making roles, as well as diminish their likelihood of accepting or participating in law-breaking activities (Blasko et al., 2018; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2019).

However, what the foregoing measures seem to omit is an all-important part of what drives corrupt behaviour anchored on socialization, norms, peer pressure and beliefs about what others (that is, simply, the pedagogical process in teaching learners) do in a situation susceptible to corruption. These behavioural and contextual mechanisms have been under-researched and should be examined in each individual context as embedded in anti-corruption regulations and laws of Zambia (Phiri et al., 2022). Phiri et al. suggests a better understanding of the embeddedness of corrupt practices in social norms in Zambian schools. For instance, that, what provides a better understanding of corruption is not the generalisation of it and normalisation in the schools. But, in agreement with Phiri (2020) is the suggestion to define corruption as a cultural weapon for supporting one another, materially and emotionally. This aspect of defining corruption in schools is missing in most Civic Education curriculum, hence its proliferation in schools.

Historically in Zambia, the curriculum has always been used to set a foundation in periods of significant change of course for the nation. A case in point is when the Multi-Party system of 1991 replaced the 27 One-Party state and when free-market policies replaced the previous socialist policies of the same periods respectively (Curriculum Development Centre, 2013; Ministry of General Education, 2021; Moonga et al., 2018). Moonga et al. (2018) and

Wentzell (2006) argue that a curriculum should be framed in such a way that it helps to respond to the needs of society and achieve its social aims. For a country that scored 33 out of 100 points on a scale of Zero being the most corrupt and hundred denoting the least corrupt on the 2022 Corruption Perception Index of the Transparency International Zambia, much requires to be done in the anti-corruption crusade in Zambia.

There is need for far-reaching and sustainable intervention to be mainstreamed and anchored on the curriculum (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2019). In this case, the role of teachers in cultivating the desired values cannot be over emphasized but yet in Zambia, it is difficult to find evidence of any effort being made either by government agencies or stakeholders to empower teachers with value impartation skills either through teacher training or through continuous professional development workshops on the issues of corruption (Magusu et al., 2020; Nyaude, 2018; Sakala, 2016). It is against this background that the study sets out to explore curriculum-related barriers to the teaching and learning of anti-corruption education in selected secondary schools in Zambia.

Statement of the problem

Corruption is a worldwide problem, and it is particularly serious in developing countries. Corruption harms development because it is a major obstacle to democracy and the rule of law, it depletes national wealth, denies communities of investment and necessary services, undermines trust in social institutions, and can harm the environment through a lack of enforcement of regulations. This also jeopardizes national and global aspirations in terms of the goals of the National Anti-Corruption Policy and Sustainable Development Goals particularly SDG 4 and SDG 16, since combating corruption underpins all efforts to achieve these two goals among others (Leong, 2018).

In the Zambian context, some collaboration between the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) and ACC has taken place but the footprint of anti-corruption education material on the curriculum remains negligible. The content only appears as single topics in vector subjects such as Civic Education and Religious Education at the senior secondary level. The current approach of streaming anti-corruption education in the

curriculum and making it available through Civic Education as a compulsory subject, does not give it sufficient time to make a lasting impact on the judgment of the learners. Given this reality, it appears anti-corruption education in Zambia does not seem to have a dedicated platform from which it can be taught comprehensively in a manner that ensures continuity to inculcate lasting change in the learners against the vice.

Research question

This study is guided by the following research question:

1. What are the curriculum barriers that relate to the teaching and learning of anti-corruption education in secondary schools in Zambia?
2. What are the responses of these barriers to the learners in the school system?

Theoretical framework

This study was guided by Macrae's Game theory (1982) which falls under the critical tradition under the social sciences philosophy. The game theory was used because it provided a framework for analysing the behaviour of individuals and institutions when they are placed in situations where the outcome of their actions depends on the actions of others. In the game theory, players make decisions based on their own interests and expectations of how others will behave. The outcome of the game is determined by the actions of all players, and each player's payoff is influenced by the choices of others. The concept of a "payoff" is essential in the game theory. It is what players gain from their actions in a game. The payoff can be in the form of money, status, power, or any other benefit that the player values (Nyaude, 2018). On similar issue, Phiri et al. (2022) argued that words and actions are critical for payoffs to take place. The Zambian people allude to this game of corruption in local language as the phenomenon of *Nichekeleko* widely considered to be a problem. This word literally means "cut a slice for me or what is in it for me" (Phiri, 2020). In the context of game theory, corruption, locally known as *Nichekeleko* can be seen as a rational decision by individuals or institutions to gain a personal advantage at the expense of society. Similarly, the game theory can explain the lack of corruption content in curriculum development due to the incentives and behaviours of those who may have been

involved in it. If we take a hypothetical scenario where a government official is offered a bribe by a contractor in exchange for awarding a curriculum contract, one can easily apply the game theory to understand the situation better.

In relation to this article, individuals engage in corrupt behaviour because they perceive that doing so will increase their personal gain or advantage in curriculum development regardless of the negative impact on others or society. Macrae (1982) further suggests that corruption can become self-reinforcing, as individuals who benefit from it gain more power and influence to maintain their position, while those who do not benefit from it become marginalized and powerless. This creates a vicious cycle that perpetuates corruption and inequality in society.

Reviewed literature

In Rwanda, it is believed that promoting anti-corruption values and content among Rwandan children can help them resist corruption in economic activities. It could be a way of anchoring the desired Rwandan identity, strengthening and perpetuating anti-corruption (Ubufura) cultural practices and enabling children to pass it on to the following generations (Basabose, 2019). Basabose (2019) posits that building a strong anti-corruption system requires a well built and planned education for ethical values. Such an education has a prominent role in the fight against corruption if holistically implemented. He however stops short of putting forward a practical way of incorporating the Ubufura teachings in the mainstream curriculum given the limitations of anti-corruption watchdogs such as funding or physical coverage in terms of manpower. The Ubufura project in Rwanda makes an interesting case. Ubufura is a Kinyarwanda word, not easy to translate into other languages but, it encompasses all positive values.

The most highlighted Ubufura values include integrity, nobility, honesty, and commitment to doing good. It should be noted however that the Ubufura interventions were implemented as extra-curricular lessons outside the normal class times and on weekends (Basabose, 2019) what is also noteworthy about the Ubufura project is that it is a home-grown integrity education programme based on Rwandan values and culture and given to young school going children. The government created what is

called the National Itorero Commission (NIC) which is a Civic Education programme at national level with the aim of creating an opportunity for Rwandans to enhance positive values, build a sense of responsibility as citizens to serve the Country (Basabose, 2019; Values Education for Public Integrity, 2020). Ubupfura as a home-grown initiative should be understood as an educational programme which seeks to cultivate a sense of nobility. The values of nobility found in Ubupfura also espoused by the NIC include humbleness, advising, fulfilling agreements, patience, honesty, gratefulness, carefulness and integrity. The preoccupations of the NIC express the intention of Rwandan society to uphold positive values and many of them have a link with anti-corruption efforts.

Zimbabwe

Nyaude (2018) argues that the world over, mainstreaming of anti-corruption programmes is associated with positive results that may assist in fighting corruption. He advances that the mainstreaming of anti-corruption and integrity education and programmes into the formal curriculum from early childhood development, primary, secondary, college to university level is also a vital and powerful strategy in combating corruption. Nyaude (2018) cites Annan in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2017) arguing that one way to combat corruption is to reach out to a younger generation and drive home the message in a hard-hitting manner because it is not a matter of choice but a matter of imperative. We educate them that corruption and bribery are a poison. We use that word. Then they take a pledge, sign a banner and go home and tell their parents. When awareness about ethics and corruption is imparted to young people at school level, there is a better chance of producing people who grow up respecting their offices. Nyaude (2018) writes that the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) influenced the Zimbabwean school curriculum through the mainstreaming of anti-corruption studies in the Civic Education syllabus at both secondary and primary school levels. Nyaude (2018) notes that in the proposals by ZACC, the emphasis is on ZACC's credo refusing resist reject and report corruption. Such an emphasis is bound to make students in schools appreciate the need to meaningfully contribute to the fight against corruption. In the Zimbabwean case, anti-corruption authority managed to push not for

integrity education material to be incorporated at one stage or grade but all the way from primary to secondary school level thereby making it possible for pupils to be exposed long enough to the material for it to influence their attitudes.

Zambia

The footprint of anti-corruption education in the curriculum is debatable and leaves both the teacher and the learners oblivious to the intentions of certain anti-corruption topics. The opportunity to drive the point home is lost on both the pupil and the teacher who has equally not been oriented to the purpose of such material if it gets included (Curriculum Development Centre, 2013). Given the above, one of the biggest obstacles to learning integrity education on the learners' side is an inbuilt weakness in the curriculum because it does not go far enough in terms of content and objectives with regards to the inclusion of anti-corruption material (Curriculum Development Centre, 2013). Civic Education (CVE) which is expected to carry the most content on integrity education is supposed to transmit relevant knowledge, instil values and develop dispositions that are necessary to reduce corruption. Civic Education in Zambian secondary schools is anchored on the desire to have an emphasis on education that positively impacts on the learners in order to advance national interests in a fair manner (Magusu et al., 2020). Pedagogical challenges may be said to be one of the biggest obstacles to the teaching of anti-corruption content in Zambia today. This is because effective impartation of values in the learners demands the utilisation of participatory learner methodologies which are seemingly not put into practice on the ground. Research seems to suggest that the crucial requirement of using practical teaching methods in social sciences such as CVE or Religious Education (RE) which carry some anti-corruption themes is largely overlooked.

In some cases, teachers may not just fully grasp why it is necessary to use participatory learner methods when teaching content which is supposed to bring about adoption of values. These inadequacies more often than not can also be traced back to the type of training teachers may have undergone at teacher training institutions (Magusu et al., 2020). The integrity education component clearly demands a practical participatory kind of pedagogy and yet in real terms on the ground, it is taught under a theoretical

approach. This undermines the objective of effectively cultivating anti-corruption values in learners because the prevalent one-way lecturing type of teaching methodologies simply cannot cultivate cultures, communities and change effectively deliver results where value adoption is concerned (Magusu et al., 2020; Sakala, 2016). Simply, literature to this study points to the Cultural barriers in fighting corruption in the education sector, which have been ignored for some time now. In support with McBrien (2015) points out that sometimes there is a thin line between the norms and values of traditional social, economic and political systems and those of modern bureaucratic ones. These barriers have permeated in the education sector. For example, in many traditional cultures, officials are not paid salaries from a central fund but were entitled to what may be referred to as prestations income (Mauss, 1967). This is accrued through getting a portion of collected tributes, rentals and other obligations to the traditional leadership. In many developing societies, such a mind-set has remained unchallenged to a large extent, and this is often breeding ground for corruption and its perpetuation since in many cases. Unfortunately, in the education content for CVE or RE, such practices are ignored. Normally, it is the citizen requiring a service who may even offer a bribe to officials without considering it as unethical. This also lines up with the position of Phiri (2020) who equally points out that in many developing countries' traditional societies, what can be seen as corruption is often understood to be an extension of a helping hand to someone who maybe in need of help. Akin to this, both on the legal and traditional basis, it is rightly accepted in the Zambia's education sector to. Such cultural practices perpetuate corruption and the schools are not immune to it. For instance, according to the Chr. Michelson Institute (2006) corruption in the education sector takes various forms, some of which are not so obvious. It includes: the diversion of funds intended for school needs; the granting of schools places to children influenced by the granting of monetary or material favours by parents; teacher recruitment, postings and promotions influenced by bribes or nepotism; private tutoring outside school hours given to paying pupils reducing teachers' motivation in ordinary classes, and reserving compulsory topics for the private sessions to the detriment of learners who do not or cannot pay for them;

teachers engaging in sexual relationships with learners and examination malpractices. In line with Phiri et al. (2022), what appears to be corruption may in fact be incompetence by key actors in the education sector, or it may be due to inadequacies in infrastructure such as fewer classroom spaces for learners, weaker financial management, accounting and monitoring systems.

Methodology

This study used a cross-sectional descriptive survey to enable us collect data from different sources at a single point in time. The study used purposeful sampling technique because of ease access to key informants in the field. It also helped with identifying information-rich cases for study. The samples were drawn from two (2) schools of Lusaka in Lusaka province and Mbala district in Northern Province of Zambia. Four schools were purposively selected. Two (2) from Lusaka which also happens to be the capital city and two in Mbala, in the Northern province. Therefore, all institutions of interest mentioned in this article, namely the Curriculum Development Centre and the Anti-corruption Commission are both headquartered in Lusaka and were of great importance to the study. Various studies suggest that anti-corruption bodies are often handicapped to initiate most education-based integrity building programmes due to resource limitations (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2011; Street, 2009; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2017). Succinctly, assessing whether teachers have been oriented by the technocrats from ACC to the integrity materials was done with learning institutions closest to them and later investigated whether teachers in outlying provinces like Northern province and Mbala district in particular have had a chance to be introduced to the goals of the integrity materials which have been inserted across the curriculum. Equally, the role of administrators in the successful implementation of any changes or additions to the curricular was considered in the data collection for this article. The administrators play an important role in the implementation of any curriculum as they carry out various roles such as supervisory, monitoring, keeping records of the events happening in schools, the motivation of teachers, and provision of teaching and learning resources.

Homogeneous purposive sampling was used to select teachers, administrators and learners from each selected schools because we

aimed at picking a small sample with similar characteristics in order to describe some particular subgroup in depth. The population for this study comprised Lusaka and Mbala teachers and learners in the district of Northern Zambia and Lusaka itself with a population of 200 and sample size of 20. Here, we applied the 10% golden principle rule to arrive at the sample size of 20 as follows. The sample was distributed as follows: 2 teachers (Administrators) and 16 learners and two officials from ACC bodies. The 16 learners, who took CVE and RE, were from Mbala and Lusaka. The 8 learners were in Mbala and 8 learners in Lusaka district, totalling to 20 as sample size. Why? In agreement with Thomas (2020), this was found to be cost effective, reliable and less time consuming than other types of studies. The case study research method is an empirical inquiry that analyses a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life scenario, when the demarcation between phenomenon and context lacks clarity, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 2009). This implies that the study based its data collection qualitatively as the key approach. This was an empirical investigation that gave a clear understanding of the participants' views and experiences and captured participants' perceptions as they occurred naturally (Azih & Nwosu, 2011). In addition, the qualitative approach allowed us to gather information and rich data through face-to-face interviews with school managers, teachers, parents and learners with a lengthy and deep involvement in the natural settings which included the selected four (4) public secondary schools, two (2) in Lusaka (Lusaka province) and two (2) in Mbala (Northern Province) of Zambia. This qualitative approach used in this study helped us deal with participants' real words, feelings and meanings. The schools were purposively selected as they helped us to clearly ascertain whether there were any programs that might have been initiated in urban areas which might not have been receiving sufficient attention in far flung provinces or vice-versa.

Lusaka was purposively sampled because this is where the Curriculum Development Centre in Zambia is located and it is where teaching and learning resources are developed and the decision makers and educational technocrats who dictate the content and direction of the curriculum are found. Equally, Lusaka was also chosen because of the location of the ACC headquarters in order

to get the commission's views on its collaboration efforts with the Ministry of Education. Northern province was selected to find out how different provinces might be putting more or less emphasis on the anti-corruption content of social sciences in the curriculum and whether teachers in some provinces might have been oriented to the intended civic competence of integrity and honesty that is targeted to be imparted in learners by the teaching of the topic of corruption in both religious education and civic education. In agreement with Phiri et al. (2024), this research approach allowed for triangulation of findings, enhancing the credibility and validity of the study results as explained below.

Findings and discussion

Lack of specialised training in value impartation skills for teachers

At the teaching level, the first barrier that stands out is that, while there is some anti-corruption education content in the curriculum, there has been no specific component in teacher training programs to develop value impartation skills in the teachers themselves. Value impartation in learners requires a certain set of skills which is missing in the CVE secondary school content. For example, one teacher in Lusaka, when asked if they had been oriented to anti-corruption values impartation teaching methods during training at college or university, the teacher for RE and CVE replied that: "*Corruption-related information was included in topics such as governance*".

When asked if they felt the level of skills, they were exposed to during training was enough to shape the values of learners, they responded in the negative, or simply saying: *No*. This highlights the inadequacies of teacher training on corruption content right from teacher training institutions. This point was further reinforced by the education officer at ACC when she was asked whether the ACC provides any logistical support to teachers teaching carrier subjects of anti-corruption education. She responded as follows: *The last workshop for primary and secondary school teachers to build capacity for teaching was held in 2017, and there have been no follow-up seminars or workshops for teachers in this regard due to financial constraints because these programs are expensive. Teachers have to bear the cost of such.*

Thus, from the foregoing, it is apparent that the skill of value impartation in learners,

which is crucial in delivering anti-corruption education, is neither explicitly taught at teacher training institutions in Zambia nor built upon through in-service platforms or realistically given support by stakeholders judging by the time-lapse of nearly six years from when last such an event was held.

Lack of monitoring and evaluation of stakeholders in the implementation of anti-corruption civic education content

There is a lack of assessment mechanisms on the impact and results of anti-corruption education in Zambia. On this point, Phiri et al. (2022) posits that data gathered from head teachers and administrators on how corruption flourishes, despite the teaching and learning of CVE in schools, points to the “phenomenon of ambiguity” in communication, official laws and regulations. This is clearly portrayed by the response of ACC education officer when asked if they undertook any follow-ups to ensure that the anti-corruption education component was being effectively taught. The response to the question: Is the anti-corruption education effectively taught in schools in Zambia? One ACC officer responded that as “No” to the question. Phiri et al. (2022) observed that corruption is a discrete act by the parties involved. Obviously, it is no wonder the oblivious training materials for teaching anti-corruption content in CVE and RE curricula in secondary schools. Nevertheless, this presents a sharp contrast with most successful anti-corruption authorities, such as Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) in Hong Kong, which conducts comprehensive assessments of corruption attitudes and extents of tolerance for corruption among learners and young people. The Korea Institute of Public Administration (KIPA) in South Korea also undertakes surveys to assess corruption prevalence levels among the young people. This is necessary because it enables them to know whether they are succeeding or failing in their quest to rid their societies of the menace of corruption. An assessment of the local curriculum reveals that such a survey or assessment on attitudes to corruption among the learners and immediate graduates of educational institutions is lacking. This implies that the mandated bodies and stakeholders do not have a clue as to whether their efforts through the curriculum bear fruit or not. This gap has not gone unnoticed even to the learners in Mbala and Lusaka who pointed it out during face-to face interviews by stating that: *The*

ACC should undertake surveys because it is not everyone who can freely express their opinions on corruption, so they should be consistent in undertaking these surveys to ascertain the prevailing scale of the vice not only in learners but the communities as well.

With regards to the Zambian curriculum contents, much remains to be done as the pattern seems to be one where ACC collaborates with the Curriculum Development Centre, mostly at the time of inserting some anti-corruption education content into the curriculum. Once that is done, ACC stands on the side lines and leaves everything in the hands of educational institutions. There is no follow-up or assessment of how the content is delivered in schools. Scheduled programs for capacity development in the teachers responsible for its delivery or consistent material support in terms of supplementary materials and support programs for schools are clearly absent. Despite being the custodian of the anti-corruption education component in the curriculum, the ACC has stood at a distance citing financial constraints and inadequacies in manpower availability. Out of the two schools visited in Lusaka province, only one school Head teacher reported having received personnel from the ACC who gave a corruption awareness talk to both the teachers and the pupils separately. This was further collaborated by the Social Sciences Head of Department, who even produced hard copies of supplementary readers on corruption awareness. In the same breath, when the Head of Department for Social Sciences under whom the three known carrier subjects (Civic Education, Religious Studies and Social Studies) of anti-corruption education fall was asked about the availability of monitoring tools designed to assess teacher efficiency and capacity in teaching the anti-corruption education component, he responded thus: *The monitoring tools we have are to measure teacher efficiency in overall delivery of the entire syllabus but not for monitoring a single component of the subject on corruption.* One of the pupils when asked to respond on anti-corruption education for the last five years stated that: *There has been no record of ACC personnel addressing them directly about corruption or any other top government official from the Office of the President where the ACC is housed in Zambia.*

Interviews with learners in Mbala and Lusaka revealed the tendency by education officials in Zambia to ignore technical

information from state actors, namely, the ACC and the Drug enforcement commission. Nevertheless, it was said by the pupils that: *There is the absence of the Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) in Mbala to enlighten them about the dangers of substance abuse.* This is when asked about the presence of the drug enforcement Commission in Mbala and Lusaka schools. The answers were similar in Northern Province and Lusaka schools visited. Both the Deputy Head teacher and the Social Sciences Head of Department denied having received any personnel to enlighten the learners or teachers about the evils of corruption. The pupils equally corroborated the same report independent of any influence of the two administrator (Ministry of General Education, 2021). When asked if there were any Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) with an interest to help disseminate the integrity message to learners, all administrators in Mbala and Lusaka schools, the learners and administrators responded in the negative. In fact, the education officer at the ACC, when asked about the extent to which other stakeholders participated in getting the integrity message out, she responded by saying: *The United Nations office previously used to add something towards the printing of corruption awareness regalia on World Anti-Corruption day, but that has since stopped while other stakeholder NGOs come to us for assistance with funding. We also would like to do more but budgetary constraints inhibit us.*

Limitation of anti-corruption content space and coverage in curriculum

The curriculum is said to have some age-appropriate content of integrity education inserted at every level (Curriculum Development Centre, 2013). However, it is at the junior secondary school level that traceable inserts of anti-corruption education begin to clearly reflect in the curriculum in subjects such as Religious studies and Social Studies. The entry level to senior secondary school level, which is grade ten, opens up much-needed momentum in the anti-corruption education agenda in subjects such as CVE and RE. However, the content is limited to grade ten levels which only appear as a single topic, and the initiative is lost in successive grades. While anti-corruption education cannot be the only topic in the carrier subjects such as CVE and RE, there is a need to keep the anti-corruption theme at the fore by inserting, at the very least, even one connected and supporting

topic about anti-corruption education at every level of education.

During the focus group discussion with the pupils in Mbala there was a suggestion to increase the anti-corruption education content in the curriculum. To attest to the highlighted gap in content, teachers were asked to state whether they felt that the curriculum had enough anti-corruption education content to be able to alter learner attitudes to become corruption averse. The respondent subject teachers replied in the negative, showing that the current level of anti-corruption education penetration was inadequate to bring about attitude change. One of the respondent teachers at Mbala secondary school went on to suggest that: *Anti-corruption education should not only be limited to social sciences but that other subjects like Business Studies, Accounts and Commerce should be included as carrier subjects. This is because they all offer a convenient platform to be used as carrier subjects for anti-corruption education because of overlapping issues in these areas which border on integrity.*

Passive attitudes in learners toward carrier subjects in Mbala and Lusaka secondary schools

According to this finding was that learners often tended to have a passive attitude towards social sciences because of their bulky nature. This negative approach ultimately affects how the component of anti-corruption education is also perceived since social sciences are currently the carrier subjects. At junior secondary school, this problem is further compounded by the fact that social studies, which is the carrier subject at the junior school level, is currently a combination of three formerly standalone subjects of Civics, Geography, and History. Many times teachers of the carrier subject are pressed for time to complete the subject syllabus before examinations, and this also consequently piles overwhelming pressure on the learners. One teacher at Lusaka girls had this to say about social studies: *The pupils do not necessarily study social studies to understand the concepts and values it may contain, but oftentimes they are compelled to memorize the bulky information for the sole purpose of passing the subject in the final examinations at Grade 9.*

The other teacher at Mbala boarding school had this to say: *Corruption subject is confusing. It would be a nightmare to include such contents in science subjects for example.*

We deal with numbers. How can we concentrate on perceptions? This argument is supported by Phiri et al. (2022) who observed that: there is no one single definition of corruption that can be applied to all circumstances. Given the above, it is no wonder that the very ideals of integrity education that are infused at that level are barely noticed by the learners or emphasized by the teachers either. This problem somehow tends to persist towards social sciences in general at senior secondary school as they are seen as being bulky, and this creates passive attitudes towards carrier subjects for anti-corruption education. Ultimately, this behaviour according to Phiri (2020) tends to be replicated as a way of establishing and perpetuating corruption in society.

Insufficient teaching and learning materials on anti-corruption education in Mbala and Lusaka schools

For instance, the lack of teaching and learning resources like technology, textbooks, and supplementary materials eventually makes the learning of anti-corruption education monotonous and non-interactive from both the learning and teaching perspective. Pupils, for instance, are not able to easily follow and concentrate on the lessons in the absence of sufficient individual textbooks in anti-corruption education-embedded subjects. Insufficient teaching and learning resources also make important aspects of interactive learning, such as site and field visits, nearly impossible. Respondent teachers in both schools of the north and Lusaka visited cited inadequacies and limitations for outdoor learning activities topic related sites and field visits. For example, when the Social Sciences Head of Department at one of the research site Secondary Schools in Lusaka was asked about the main obstacle to the teaching and learning of anti-corruption education, he responded by saying: *The general problem that we have has to do with book to pupil ratio, the materials are not enough. For example, the teacher to pupil ratio and the personnel from the education department at the ACC seem to be understaffed because they do not frequently visit schools. This inadequacy of teaching and learning materials is a common problem in almost all the schools, maybe apart from the mission schools.*

This observation is also supported by Phiri et al. (2022) who observed that; “corruption in the education sector takes place

due to reserving compulsory topics for the private sessions to the detriment of learners who do not or cannot pay for them...”.

Lack of forums for teachers of anti-corruption education carrier subjects

This is another finding for this study. Plausible secondary data from school reports in 2021 revealed that teachers of carrier subjects for anti-corruption education in Zambia had no common platform or association exclusively dedicated to the improvement of values of education and impartation skills. For example, there are no single reports on administrative files where a teacher has been invited to attend a workshop on anti-corruption content. The implication to this is that there is no exchange of best practice ideas or peer-to-peer review of approaches beyond individual schools. Other umbrella associations like Secondary Schools Teachers Union of Zambia (SOSTAZ) tend to have agendas which are too diverse to zero in on effective teaching of values meaningfully. Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) recommend the establishment of a platform to champion the teaching of values to learners and teachers in social sciences education for primary and secondary schools in Lusaka province. While anti-corruption education is not a subject on its own as yet in Zambia, creating a forum for all teachers who handle carrier subjects would serve the cause of anti-corruption education well, especially at the local level.

Internationally, there are various such forums dedicated to the advancement of anti-corruption education, including but not limited to Education for Justice (E4J). The E4J initiative is part of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The purpose of E4J is to enhance the capacity of educators to teach values such as integrity, social responsibility, and respect for the rule of law. Values-based Education (VbE) is another international forum to which local teachers can freely subscribe. It is a global movement that promotes values education in schools. Teachers who are involved in VbE are taught how to teach values such as anti-corruption, respect and responsibility within their curriculums. Locally, these types of forums have the potential to enable the sharing of best practices by teachers with relative ease. The same platforms could easily be utilized by anti-corruption authorities to either build capacity in teachers at minimum cost because some of these events can easily be convened online as the advent of COVID-19 demonstrated that

many activities which were once deemed only possible through physical participation are now virtually convened and perfectly accepted by everyone. The absence of anti-corruption education forums also demonstrates the lack of effort being made by schools on board to mentor their teachers to join anti-corruption social networks for sharing of best practices. Phiri et al. (2021) argues that social networks are the maintenance of social bonds, social solidarity and cohesion which is ignored in schools. During an interview with one of the Deputy Head teachers at Mbala secondary school on an inquiry of any ongoing correspondence between her school and any institution, whether locally or externally, for purposes of maintaining a network for capacity building in values education, she responded in the negative stating that: *There was nothing of that sort taking place or in the near future.*

This clearly indicates social networking inequalities that teachers and those in the main stream education sector face. This is in line with Phiri (2022, p. 190) observation stated that: “there are many situations in life where equality is not an inherent condition”, but perpetuated by those in authority, that increase teachers lack of interest in beefing up anti-corruption education content in Zambia.

Dormancy of the anti-corruption clubs in schools

While anti-corruption clubs for learners do not deliver anti-corruption education through the curriculum directly, they certainly play a key role in keeping it on the minds of pupils through the activities of the clubs, also go a long way in generating and sustaining interest about the problem. The goal behind the formation of such clubs is often to sufficiently enlighten the active members of the club, who, in turn, are expected to disseminate the same information to the rest of the student populace. During interviews with one learner at Mbala secondary school when asked about the existence and activities of an anti-corruption club, the head of the department under whose department both carrier subjects of CVE and RE fall, gave a response that painted a picture of a robust, vibrant and power club. The answer was robustly in *Bemba*¹ language as follows: *Tulakaka*, refers to the club that prosecute and arrest corrupt learners. This

guides the individual’s interaction with others and social institution, hence its popularity in schools (Phiri, 2020). Equally, when the Deputy Head teacher spoke of the Anti-Substance Abuse club, she said the drug enforcement club has reported 10 pupils in 2021 for drug related cases. These have successively undergone drug counselling and rehabilitation programs and are serving as pioneers to the scary act. This shows evidently active, member students who usually are disseminating information and put in place programs for other pupils within the school. The administrator said while personnel from the DEC often visited the school to offer awareness talks with the learners, this was not the case with ACC officers, and her office was not in receipt of any scheduled programs from the Anti-Corruption Club. In respect of ACCs being active on the ground to push their agenda, the authorities were doubtful and suggested that the commission should make its presence felt more on the ground in practical terms because it was not even reflected on the list of active clubs in the school. This implies that the measures suggested were that the Commission should circulate more anti-corruption literature among the learners. Equally that the ACC should place much emphasis on consistent reaching out to the teaching fraternity in their efforts curb corruption in Zambia.

Shortage of real-life models and double standards by some teachers

The interviews with senior educators at the Provincial Education offices in Mbala pointed out the biggest challenges on teaching anti-corruption education in schools: those who engaged in corruption were seemingly getting away with it, and this seemed to make those who wanted to do things the right way appear as if they were imprudent. One official elaborated as follows: *The notion that is there is if I want something that I do not have, but I have access to public resources, then it is okay to use even public resources. People want to fit in at all costs.* Additionally, interviews with one Provincial Education Officer also revealed that: *...there were cases where parents had paid some money to invigilators in the hope of their children being given some answers in the exam or for an invigilator to turn a blind eye to some malpractice...often when such an illegality had taken place and it later came to the attention of the authorities, a number of teachers suffered severe consequences for*

¹ A Bantu-speaking peoples scattered over wide areas of the south-eastern part of Congo (Kinshasa), eastern Angola, and northern and north-western Zambia

amounts which turned out to be ridiculously small.

Interviews with head teachers in Lusaka and Mbala reveal that, there were also some unfortunate isolated incidences where some parents were the ones who go to invigilators to access examination scripts and offer some monetary reward in exchange for examination answers and turn a blind eye to corruption in schools. In agreement with Phiri et al. (2024) on a similar issue posit the grounds of compensation and liabilities for those that are involved in examinations management may contribute to unethical conduct in curriculum designs in secondary schools. Invigilators who show answers to learners usually are small amounts that have resulted in jeopardizing the future life of learners over petty rewards. This shows how pupils struggled to identify real-life models in the fight against corruption both in society at large and in the learning environment. This is understandable as it makes pupils believe that even in the school environment; corruption is a way of life and normal social exchange. In agreement with Phiri (2020) who argued that corruption is conceptualized as a joint activity of two or more actors in which each actor has something the other values. One pupil stated as follows: *Ifwe tulibakapoto* meaning (I am a prefect with power). This response is indicative of the way some teachers showed a preference for specific pupils. This form of favouritism and confirms how corruption content is ignored in most curriculum. This is also stated by Phiri et al. (2022) who argued that: *Corruption is a discrete act by the parties involved*. It is no wonder that the phrase “a teacher is never late or absent” is coined to reflect how corruption is experienced by education users and perfected by head teachers and education board secretaries in schools (Phiri et al., 2022)

Lack of emphasis on integrity education and its values

One of the pupils in one of the focus group discussions in Mbala explained that it was not easy to prioritize the integrity education component of the curriculum because it is given without any emphasis on pupils acquiring any values from it. He further stated that: *The information given to us on anti-corruption education may be enough, but we feel it is for the sole purpose of remembering it for the examinations*.

This was also echoed by the pupils in Lusaka who seemed to struggle to make a

connection between the fight against corruption and the immediate benefits that can accrue to society in general in terms of social service delivery in areas such as education and health. This position was also echoed by an official at the provincial education office who also made the same observation saying: *The problem is that the people entrusted with disseminating this information is that they are sitting in their offices at the expense of disseminating the integrity message where it matters most, especially in schools*.

Further, it was confirmed in the research that as far as NGOs such as Transparency International Zambia, whose main preoccupation is fighting corruption, are concerned, there was no trace of them making contact either with the learning institutions or the provincial education office in Northern Province itself. It was verified that they had not approached the educational administrators with any anti-corruption initiative targeted at the learners in Northern Province. Yet these are the stakeholders who should naturally be expected to team up with learning institutions for the common purpose of mitigating the pandemic of corruption.

Delayed introduction of learners to anti-corruption education

Among the most prominent responses noted in this paper were the realization by educationists at every level, from the classroom teachers to the head teachers and provincial leaders in the education system that the anti-corruption education was supposed to be introduced to the learners at the earliest possible time and sustained throughout in age-appropriate but clear enough measures. Interviews at the provincial level, with the senior administrators revealed that anti-corruption education should be commenced at early childhood stage. The argument was that the inner person should be appealed to conveniently and effectively done through education if it is commenced early enough. During interviews, the provincial education officer in Lusaka Province went on to say: *I would say that we start talking about corruption when it is late, and this is a hindrance to change. We have so many deterrents, and the punishment is quite stiff, but we do not see people refraining from engaging in corruption. I feel we can only start dismantling corruption if we start early. If we want to fight corruption when it is in its full blossom, then it will be difficult because there are also people who are pushing back, and*

they seem to be more powerful. Starting early is the key because when you catch me at three years and mould me into an adult who despises corruption; this will stay with me forever. Every time honesty and integrity are mentioned to the young learners, it is also an opportunity to begin teaching them about the evils of corruption. There are a number of activities that can be incorporated which can build trust and honesty in the children, and this is all dependent on the strengths of the competencies lined up in the syllabus.

The views expressed at the provincial level were echoed at the school level at one of the research sites in Lusaka. But one wonders why these strategies are not implemented early enough because children are most impressionable at the earliest years of school. The same views were reiterated at the two schools in Northern Province which were used as research sites, with one administrator at one of the schools saying: *How I wish they could be commencing this strategy early in the life of learners; it can be going a long way.*

Limited content coverage of anti-corruption education in the curriculum

The reigning in of corruption can offer so much promise to the entire populace. The institution of education, particularly the curriculum, is one platform that has not yet been effectively utilized to include corruption education in Zambia. Anti-corruption education requires a more solid footing in the curriculum because it plays a crucial role in promoting ethical behaviour, transparency, and accountability in society. According to the World Bank report on “Opportunities, Towards Sustainable Growth and Jobs” it is estimated that Zambia loses approximately 3-5% of its gross domestic product annually due to corruption (World Bank, n.d.). This estimate shows the significant impact corruption has on the Zambian economy. In monetary terms, this simply means the country loses no less than a billion dollars to corruption every year. If this corruption were to be effectively brought under control, many of the loans that the country is forced to borrow would not be necessary at all. When all these factors are taken into account, the arguments of the guardians of the curriculum about not having space to accommodate integrity education as a standalone subject are conflicting, given that the same curriculum has managed to accommodate foreign subjects like French and Chinese as independent subjects while offering

negligible chances of improving the corruption content in the curriculum. Short of doing something as radical as incorporating integrity education as an exclusive subject in the curriculum, there is still need to take steps that can change the status quo about anti-corruption education in the Zambian school curriculum.

Additionally, in agreement with Phiri (2020) who observed that among the main theories on corruption is the lack of clarity on why it proliferates. The most important reason for clarity is the underestimation on the importance of lexicon and relations of power. Therefore, the coverage of anti-corruption education content is limited as carrier subjects for failure to include theoretical perspectives in the curriculum, i.e. Social Studies at junior secondary school, Civic Education, and Religious Education Course Codes 2044/2046, have all managed to only feature the content as a standalone topic. In Civic Education, there are some topics where the course has attempted to make mention of corruption in other processes, but this does not amount to continuity at all because the connections and implications are not that vivid. What is valid is what Hedin (2001) referred to as social networks. The most important function of social networks in society is that they can assist authorities to trace how resources and information are shared and distributed. The carrier teaching subjects have ignored social networks in its curriculum. Therefore, if the Zambian curriculum approach is to integrate anti-corruption education by using not only standalone subject on integrity then there are still many other parts of the curriculum that can be used to increase space for the anti-corruption content. For example, language and science subjects, including local languages and the English language subjects, can all be ideal carriers of anti-corruption education content. Business Studies at the junior secondary school level as well as Commerce and Accounts at the senior secondary school level, have all already been suggested by existing research to have the potential to conveniently carry the integrity message more effectively than the current design of the 2013 curriculum.

Here are some reasons why these subjects are suitable for embedding anti-corruption education: English: English language education provides a platform for students to develop critical thinking, communication, and analytical skills. By incorporating anti-corruption education in English literature and language classes,

students can explore literary works that depict the consequences of corruption and the importance of integrity. Business Studies at the junior school level, Commerce, and Accounts at the senior level are directly related to understanding financial transactions, business operations, and managing resources. Integrating anti-corruption education in these subjects can help students understand the impact of corruption on financial systems and the importance of maintaining transparency and honesty in business practices. It can also equip students with the knowledge and skills to identify and prevent corrupt practices in organizations (Anechiarico & Jacobs 1996). Nevertheless, the grossing over of anti-corruption material in business and science subjects is, as Phiri (2020) said, is an illegal or immoral action, contextually understood as a habitual practice of negligence, which seems to be a way of life by those who draft subjects' curriculum in the education sector in Zambia.

Conclusion

This paper analysed the curriculum-related barriers to the teaching and learning of anti-corruption education in the Zambian education system. The plethora of factors include: lack of specialised training in value impartation skills for teachers; cultural barriers to fighting corruption; lack of monitoring and evaluation of stakeholders in the implementation of anti-corruption Civic Education; limitation of anti-corruption content space and coverage in curriculum; delayed introduction of learners to anti-corruption education; dormancy of the anti-corruption clubs in schools; Insufficient teaching and learning materials on anti-corruption education; and passive attitudes in learners toward carrier subjects. Further, the paper has also revealed that failure to enshrine corruption content in local languages in Zambia's curriculum, has provided a fertile platform for corruption to persist.

Using Macrae's Game Theory (1982), the article mapped corruption content in the curriculum for teaching and learning of CVE in selected secondary schools of Zambia, based on inductive data from interviews and literature review. What is clear in agreement with Phiri et al. (2022) is that; there is lack of involvement of teachers and pupils in CVE curriculum development and content. Therefore, it is better to consider it as multiple interaction process within a specific socio-political environment if corruption is to be reduced in Zambia. This important fact is

missing in most Anti-corruption laws, content and the pedagogical process for teaching and learning of CVE in Zambia.

Way forward

The effort of beefing up corruption content and eliminating it in schools can only be achieved when interrogated in local languages and in all subjects. In line with Phiri (2020), "words reflect not only the existence of a certain social ritual but also the way of thinking about life's important event", such as education. How we interpret words and actions are critical. Further, in agreement with Mufalo (2021), "there is need for teachers of Civic Education in schools across the country to possess a variety of teacher knowledge as outlined in the Civic Education pedagogical content in order to enhance not only effective delivery but also academic performance and learner transformation". Equally, a reflexive policy inquiry and political commitment to eliminate corruption in the education sector in Zambia is needed (Phiri et al., 2022). Dunn (2015) urges that sustainable policy makes process to contain a series of interdependent functions arrayed through time. The process begins with agenda setting, policy formulation, and policy adoption and proceeds through policy implementation, policy assessment, and policy adaptation (Lasswell & McDougal, 1943). Unfortunately, the education policy reforms in Zambia are not linked to the next and the later, in backward and forward loops, and the process as a whole has no definite beginning or end (Phiri et al., 2022). This provides curriculum designers for CVE to ignore strengthening the pedagogical process and content with multiple approaches necessary to learners about the existence of corruption in secondary schools in Zambia.

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