

Stakeholders' appraisals of the school history curriculum in Zambia on social media

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Abstract

This study attempted to capture stakeholders' views on the school history curriculum in Zambia. Stakeholders' views are an important aspect of curriculum development. Social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp have become platforms a section of Zambians uses to challenge the traditional education system. The study used a qualitative approach design by monitoring the e-comments of focus groups (teachers' forums) and individuals on Facebook on what some Zambians thought about the history curriculum. Social media was used because it provides an environment that removes traditional inhibitions of authority figures and meets people in their comfort zone, making them free to discuss otherwise sensitive topics. This research revealed that various stakeholders found the curriculum content irrelevant to the future they envisioned for themselves. The study additionally found that people in Zambia had been side-lined in discussions concerning curriculum development for history. People felt that they had been placed into the straitlaced role of consumers, and their feedback has never been sought. The study recommends revisiting the school history curriculum content to reflect stakeholders' needs and apply it to society.

Curriculum developers should also pay attention to the voices of stakeholders in society.

Keywords: History Curriculum; Social Media; Stakeholders; Curriculum Development; Facebook and Society.

Introduction

Social media platforms like Facebook are a major melting pot for many Zambians, creating an environment that transcends space and time. With the anonymity of the phone screen, people feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts with friends and strangers about matters concerning the curriculum. Various views from different stakeholders are normally a good ingredient in any curriculum development process. Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002) define stakeholders as individuals or institutions interested in the school curriculum. Contemporary curriculum development processes more frequently involve public discussions and consultations with a range of stakeholders (UNESCO, 2009). While supporting the stakeholder's involvement in curriculum development worldwide, UNESCO (2005) stated that governments should take appropriate steps to make curriculum development participatory.

The importance of citizens understanding the place of history in the school curriculum in society cannot be overemphasised. This is why Guyver (2013, as cited in Bertram, 2021) has stated that the purpose of school history is a key starting point in the design of a history curriculum. The curriculum has always been blamed for not producing the learners required by the market and society (Mushtaq, 2012). Tedesco et al. (2013) observed that citizens usually distrust governments' capacity to shape and implement long-term educational policies and the education system's effectiveness in responding to contemporary challenges and problems. This scepticism is seen through the way the curriculum is questioned by political leaders, media, families, and international evaluators. The education system is criticised because of the enormous gaps in providing essential skills and knowledge and the persistent inequalities in society (Tedesco et al., 2013).

On 10 January 2020, the Permanent Secretary (PS) of the Ministry of General Education, Dr Jobbicks Kalumba, shared his thoughts through an interview on the Zambian school curriculum. His comments came in the wake of social media discussions which had been going on for almost two years. When asked about the education system in Zambia, Kalumba responded that "this is the kind of curriculum that was left in Africa by the colonial masters and the idea of them doing that was calculated ..." (Kalumba, 2020). In supporting his argument, he gave an example by questioning why learners in Zambian schools were forced to learn about Proconsul Africanus, which bore no value in their lives. He further noted that Zambia maintained a Eurocentric curriculum because there was a lack of wide consultation with real stakeholders during curriculum design. Kalumba called for general school curriculum reform in Zambia (Kalumba, 2020). Although the conversations had

been going on long before Kalumba's interview, his perspective opened up a horde of discussions on various social media platforms on the school history curriculum.

History as a school subject has always been under scrutiny in the public domain by policymakers and general members of society. For instance, in Britain, Haydn (2012) noted that academic historians debated the form that the school history curriculum should take, with predominantly negative and scornful comments. The curriculum is at the heart of the education process as it sets out what is being learned and how and when it should be taught (Su, 2012). The curriculum also underpins all the plans and outcomes that should guide the day-to-day experiences of the classroom (Education discussion paper, 2014; Su, 2012). As for parents, they would like to know what their children are going to learn and how useful that content will be. Learners are also concerned with how the content delivered in class will be of value in the future. Therefore, Mulenga (2018) noted that the conceptualisation of a curriculum should accommodate present educational needs to suit the changing needs of society. A history curriculum, in particular, should help children to understand the process of change in time in relation to themselves (Arkell, 2006). It should embrace all attempts to describe the past and illuminate the present. Garrett (1994) noted that a history curriculum plays an important role in passing societal values to younger generations through schools.

Tedesco et al. (2013) have argued that current debates on the purpose and role of education are linked to social imaginaries, which should be achievable. At the core of these imaginaries is the construction of a more just society. Education is the hub of all ramifications of development in any country (Offorma, 2016). Bobbitt (1918: 10) argued that:

The central theory [of curriculum] is simple. Human life, however varied, consists in the performance of specific activities. Education that prepares for life is one that prepares definitely and adequately for these specific activities. However numerous and diverse they may be for any social class they can be discovered. This requires only that one go out into the world of affairs and discover the particulars of which their affairs consist. These will show the abilities, attitudes, habits, appreciations and forms of knowledge that men need. These will be the objectives of the curriculum. They will be numerous, definite and particularised. The curriculum will then be that series of experiences which children and youth must have by way of obtaining those objectives.

Social media tools that are social networking sites, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Tumbler) contribute content to new-media

aggregator platforms designed explicitly for user-generated content, representing a social infrastructure that can harness people's social cooperation (Bria, 2012). People's relationships and digital identities become publicly displayed, forming a social graph that exposes each user's connections and lists of friends and contacts. Hruska and Maresova (2020) have argued that one reason that accounts for the popularity of social media is that it provides an opportunity to receive or create and share public messages at a low cost. Social media serves as an important context in the lives of emerging adults (Hruska and Maresova, 2020). Young adults are heavy users of social media. The growth of social media usage opens up new opportunities for analysing several aspects of communication patterns. For example, social media data can be analysed to gain insights into issues, trends, influential actors, and other kinds of information (Vannucci et al., 2019). One group that has been expressive on social media content of the history curriculum has been the Zambian youth.

Young people have historically played an important role in national movements. The 'Young Turks' in Turkey helped to usher in the monarchy (Hanioglu, 2001). In South Africa, groups such as the ANC Youth League were instrumental in the fight against apartheid (Cooper, 1994). Straker (2009) studied the role of young people in nationalism and building the postcolonial state in Guinea. He argued that the youth were instrumental in the young revolutionary transformation that ended the European colonial rule in Guinea.

Similarly, in Zambia, young people were involved in the *Cha cha cha* civil disobedience in 1961 and the prolonged independence struggle. Zambia's nationalist leader and first republican President, Kenneth Kaunda, also recognised the importance of the youth in his famous song *Tiyende Pamodzi ndi Mtima Umo* (*let's move together with one heart*). In this song, he made a clarion call to young people to rally together to promote solidarity and struggle for national unity in Zambia. When he ruled a one-party state for 27 years, the young people were active in ushering in multi-party politics in 1991 under Frederick Chiluba (Kanduza, 2011). Therefore, it is unsurprising that they rejected Chiluba's unconstitutional bid for a third term ten years later. 2021, like 2001, 1991 and 1964, was a watershed year that again showed young people's power to start and influence political change. In 2021, they used the power of social media to bring about a change in government (Clayton, 2021).

The importance of social media in Zambia was revealed during the 2021 General elections when Facebook and WhatsApp were used to mobilise opposition to the ruling Patriotic Front government under Edgar Chagwa Lungu (News Digger, 2020). These youths earned themselves the name 'disgruntled youths'. A wider audience was reached through these sites, and more sustained conversations were carried out. More so than

others, the youth engaged in political conversations with heightened interest. Undeterred by threats from the incumbent PF government, Zambians aired out their grievances and suggested ways of redressing them (Musonda, 2020). They became a powerful force of influence. The result was an overwhelming voter turnout and the victory of the opposition leader, Hakainde Hichilema. Certain groups in Zambia, such as the youth, have been historically active social forces and adopted tech-savvy media platforms to mobilise support for their causes.

Statement of the problem

The effectiveness of a curriculum depends on the views of the various stakeholders in society, as it might help curriculum designers to develop a curriculum that is relevant to society. Developers will not receive backlash from various stakeholders if a curriculum is relevant. Thus, it would be important to know the people's views on the school history curriculum so that learners are given a relevant education. The stakeholders' view can help develop a school history curriculum that is not obsolete but one that is in touch with the realities of the learners. Curriculum innovations in the modern world would never be successfully implemented if the general public failed to understand their nature and purpose. Because of this argument, this study analysed social media content on Facebook to find out the views of young people on the school history curriculum in Zambia.

Purpose of the Study

This study explored stakeholders' views on Facebook on the school history curriculum in Zambia. The following research questions guided the study.

- What were the people's views on the Zambian school history curriculum?
- What kind of school history curriculum did the people want in schools?

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted Tyler's curriculum model of 1949. Tyler's model focuses on four central questions:

- What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?

- How can these educational experiences be effectively organised?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?
(Tyler, 1949)

Tyler's model can apply to all learning areas and levels. It is easy to find the appropriateness of a subject's content, activities and teaching methods based on the objective evaluation. This encourages educators to think about and reflect openly on the educational goals and objectives they have in mind for their students (Cruikshank, 2018). Tyler's achievements are noteworthy as contributions to the curriculum field and educational policy (Stone, 1985). By analysing the views of Zambians on social media on the history curriculum, the study links to Tyler's first question, which asks broad questions about the purpose of the type of education being offered in Zambia.

Literature Review

This section discusses the debates concerning the school history curriculum across Africa from various stakeholders.

Issues in the school history curriculum across Africa

The purpose of history in schools and society has continued to receive a lot of attention and scrutiny in public debates worldwide by scholars, historians, policymakers, and members of the public. The debates have bordered on issues of justification and relevance in the school curriculum. Most critics have argued that the subject was irrelevant as it focused on recounting information and memorisation (Chang'ach, 2011). The African continent has not been spared from these debates. For instance, in 2021, the conversation reported that Nigerian history was removed from the school curriculum because there were no job prospects. Learners avoided taking history as one of the subjects in school because they feared they would have no jobs (Olukoju, 2021; Alabi, 2017). Similarly, a study in South Africa showed that learners avoided taking history because they would not get good jobs and would stay in rural areas for good (Wassermann et al., 2018). Thus, the lack of prospects is one of the reasons history was losing popularity in schools.

There have been calls to revise the school history curriculum in Africa. A study by Bentrovato (2017) shows that most of the stakeholders in African countries have pointed out the need to revise the school history curriculum in their countries so that it can be more relevant and specific to the context of where it was being taught. For example, Bentrovato (2017) stated that learners from Burundi, DRC Congo and Rwanda advocated for African

and national history to be in the school history curriculum because they were ignorant of their history. In Zimbabwe, Moya and Modiba (2013) revealed that curriculum racist terms in the history syllabus were removed and replaced with Afro-centric terms. For example, the tribe was replaced with the word ethnic (Moyo and Modiba, 2013). There is still a need to work on the school history curriculum to align with the people's aspirations.

Dominant narratives continue to exist in the school history curriculum. For example, despite extensive consultations on the school history curriculum in South Africa from various societal stakeholders, the African National Congress (ANC), some associations and intellectuals were the only key voices in the school history curriculum (van Eeden, 2010). The emphasis is on historical skills and diversity to avoid a dominant white voice in the South African school curriculum. The dominant narratives should be countered in the school history curriculum so that there is a balanced representation of the history taught in schools.

There are several reasons why the school history curriculum has been called for reforms. For instance, the notions of citizenship, social justice and democracy have brought about the need to reform the school history curriculum in South Africa, Kenya, Rwanda and Zimbabwe (Bertram, 2021; Dube and Moyo, 2022; Chisholm, 2004; Nasibi and Kiio, 2005; Dzikanyanga, 2017). In other countries, such as Kenya, Rwanda and Zambia, the history syllabi have been revised to equip learners with skills and enable them to compete favourably in the global market (Kabombwe and Mulenga, 2019).

One of the challenges that the subject of history faces in Africa is that it is not taken as an imperative subject for one to succeed in future. History is seen to be simple, and learners do not require a lot of effort to pass. For instance, Silumba (2021) argued that history as a subject was losing popularity in Zambia because of the attitude and misinformation by some Ministry of Education officials who charged that history was not important by belittling the teaching and learning of history. This demoralised teachers and learners in Zambia because of the attitude of some educators.

Despite reforms that have taken place in the school history curriculum in Africa, there is still some dissatisfaction with the content of school history in Africa (Ndille, 2018; Kaburahoona, 2019). In Cameroon, for instance, the content of the school history curriculum did not align with the local reality of the learners despite the emphasis that indigenous and local content should be part of the curriculum (Ndille, 2018). Similarly, in Uganda, the content in the school history curriculum goes back to colonial days (Kaburahoona, 2019). Thus, it could be understood why there are a lot of agitations concerning the school history curricula in Africa.

Research in Ghana, Nigeria, and Tanzania has revealed that teaching methods accounted for losing history's popularity as a subject. Learners have complained that the methods of teaching history were boring. The learners did not feel engaged and left most of them dozing. Boadu (2016) argued that history was increasingly becoming unpopular in Ghana and Nigeria among learners because of a lack of innovation in the classroom. Some methods were inappropriate (Nasibi and Kiiio, 2005; Namamba and Rao, 2017; Mwachwana et al., 2014; Cobbold and Oppong, 2010). There is a need for curriculum specialists and educators to enliven the teaching and learning of history for learners to appreciate the subject.

Methodology

Mann and Stewart (2000) suggested four ways online methods can be used for qualitative data collection. These are standardised interviews in the form of email and web-based surveys, non-standardised forms of online one-to-one interviewing, 'observation' of virtual communities, and the collection of personal documents online (Mann and Stewart, 2000:10). This study falls in the category of web-based research. Web-based research focuses on capturing data for analysis on internet sites. Two types of web-based research are non-intrusive and engaged (Kitchen, 2007: 13 as cited in Gupta 2017). The non-intrusive data collection techniques do not interrupt the naturally occurring state of the site or cyber community nor interfere with it using pre-manufactured text. On the other hand, 'engaged techniques reach into the site or cyber community and involve engagement with the participants of the web source' (Kitchin, 2007: 15).

Gupta (2017) noted that non-intrusive research does not involve direct interaction between the researcher and the participants through the internet. This kind of research involves the collection of online documents available in the public domain, such as images, videos, posts or other archival materials. In non-intrusive research, the public is given uncontrolled access (Jensen, 2004). There is no expectation of privacy, and the data is not considered under the remit of human subject research for ethics review. However, there are still ongoing debates regarding how online participants can be respected and protected (Gupta, 2017).

This study used a qualitative approach, specifically, hermeneutical thematic content analysis. In this regard, e-documents in the form of comments were used to understand the views of people who created the content on social media on Facebook on the school history curriculum in Zambia. This study conveniently sampled people's views on the

Zambian school history curriculum on Facebook. Facebook platforms offer researchers an unprecedented opportunity to acquire large and diverse samples of participants. However, the Facebook population is not perfectly representative; its users tend to be younger and better educated, and some groups might be entirely excluded. People in countries where they do not have access to the internet or Facebook is blocked might be excluded (Pace and Livingstone, 2005).

One of the pitfalls of using Facebook is that users might not use their real identities, and it might be difficult to get consent from users to publish their views and verify the participant's mental age (Gupta, 2017). Pace and Livingstone (2005) aver that online research poses a risk to the individual privacy and confidentiality of the participants because of greater accessibility of information about the individuality, groups, and their communications. This can lead to shame and humiliation. The findings of this study might not put anyone in any physical or emotional danger. Based on this methodology, the study analysed the content on social media platforms such as Facebook to find out the views of the Zambians on the content of the school History curriculum by grouping the comments into themes.

Findings and Discussion

Views from the general public on the curriculum implemented in society are very important as they enable curriculum developers to get feedback on whether a curriculum is on the right track. This is because a curriculum is an effort by different stakeholders in society. Considering that some sections of society have complained about being side-lined in the process of the curriculum development process (Kabombwe and Mulenga, 2019), the Facebook platform has allowed many to give their opinions.

Views of the young people on the school history syllabus on social media

Young people had diverse opinions through several impressions of the school history content they had received in Zambia. They were very free in expressing their thoughts and shared them on various social media platforms such as Facebook. What comes out clearly from the following analysis is dissatisfaction with the content of the curriculum.

School history curriculum as irrelevant in Zambia

Some of the respondents on Facebook stated that they felt that the history curriculum was irrelevant to where they were in their lives and what they wanted to be in the future. Many

went so far as to cite some examples of topics that they felt needed to be removed from the syllabus. In this vein, one noted the following:

I feel the school curriculum should be revamped to topics that directly have a connection with real life, topics as how to make money when you don't have capital but have an idea of how to make more money, agriculture and many more that are applicable to life at an early stage as Grade 5 not some of the things we learn things like Zinjanthropus. It's a waste of time and resources like chalk and the teacher's energy. That's why we have graduates with papers but teshibe ifyakufwaya stata (cannot make ends meet). At the end of the day everything you work for you expect to be paid, so the curriculum should go direct to the point.

Similarly, another Facebook user asked if people benefitted from learning about the origins of early man in the school history curriculum. This Facebook user stated that:

How are bena Zinjanthropus and Homo-Habilis you learning at school helping?" they asked.

In response to the question one of the Facebook users responded that it "was just wasting time.

However, some people were quick to come to the defence of teaching early man history. One user justified the addition of early man in the school history curriculum in Zambia. The Facebook user posted that:

It's funny how you guys refer to a historical topic when you talking about the irrelevance of some topics ... how about they remove biology and chemistry ... photosynthesis is the process in which green plants make their own food in the presence of sunlight. Okay, then what??? Otherwise each subject is important ... take note ... some topics like Zinjanthropus try to explain a stage in the development of man ... how does this help? Well, it will help a learner have a broad understanding on the origin of man...trust me, knowing how to make money won't free us from the neo-colonialism. Knowledge can and will free us from oppression.

It can be seen that not only were some topics flagged as irrelevant but those young people were preoccupied with economic issues for their survival in future. There was a strong leaning towards subjects that would help them to have a livelihood. But as one user noted, knowledge of early history is essential for empowering previously marginalised groups like the Africans. They even pointed to broader themes such as neo-colonialism and historical knowledge as important factors in curbing such vices.

There were some teachers of history who also contributed to these conversations. Therefore, their analysis of the syllabus came from an enlightened perspective. They argued

that while the school history curriculum was relevant, it did not assess the learners on the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy. The user mentioned that:

In recent weeks, we have witnessed an interesting debate on social media on the relevance of our curriculum. This has been inspired by comments and opinion pieces that have largely trashed our curriculum as being useless. In one such piece, the author highlighted two specific examples to validate his view. The first was that the teaching of European history was irrelevant to the development of our country ... I have been working with past examination papers of history from 2016 to 2019 for the past several months and found that the way they prepare their examinations is, with due respect, below par. They just assess remembering and comprehension... ..

Another user commented that:

I have no problem with any particular subject. My worry is the irrelevance of some of the content and how the same content is casually represented both at senior and junior level. For example in history, why should we teach kingdoms both in junior and senior? Is there a shortage of topics? Also, some subjects should only be taught either in senior or junior. If repeated, they should be strictly optional, no imposition at all! If only 2 pupils choose to take that subject, let it be so.

The user further added:

We want to encourage young people to pick and stick to what they are passionate about at a very young age. Education should not be shoved down people's throats, they need to feel the relevance. So, merge subjects which share objectives, get rid of some content and examine the relevance according to advancement to senior secondary. Introduce more optional subjects focused on young people's interests and modern educational needs.

Simakando (2020) observed that the negative comments on the school history curriculum were because people did not understand the value of history in Zambia. The voice of all stakeholders is very important in curriculum development as it can help to refine a curriculum. Usually missing in these discussions is the youth voice. This is troubling because the youth have been active participants in important events in Zambia and are the recipients of this education. They are the right group to provide feedback on the school history curriculum.

Other countries like South Africa began looking at how to make history relevant to young people in schools and institutions of higher learning decades ago (Kanduzi, 2011). Kallaway (2012) noted that the history curriculum and the history class have long been at the centre of the debate about the nature of education in South Africa. The findings of this study resonate with the observation by Chabatama (2012), who noted that one of the

challenges of teaching history in Zambia was that some topics in the history syllabus were outdated and irrelevant.

The case was not different in Nigeria and Ghana, where it was noted that history as a subject was facing a lot of challenges in terms of scope and coverage (Alabi, 2017; Boadu, 2016). Martin (2018:1) argued that history curriculum designers need to pay far more attention to the dialectics of the relationship between curriculum content topics and public history in all its manifestations. Hence, we can argue that curriculum developers need to pay attention to the content in the Zambian school history curriculum.

The school history curriculum was Euro-centric

Zambians' general perception that the content in history was Eurocentric. Many felt that too much time was spent learning about the history of other countries than the local history. In expressing this, one user noted:

It has to be redone because I don't see any need of knowing too much about some foreign countries which most likely some of us would even ever be there when the opposite doesn't happen in their countries. It's even possible that the students tend to know more about other countries than Zambia.

Another user complained that "we teach too much foreign history at the expense of our local history" In agreement, another Facebook user commented:

I agree with you. Am passionate about history but I also feel our secondary school history syllabus needs a lot of attention. For sure we teach so much of foreign history at the expense of our own Zambian history. As a result, it's difficult for our learners to appreciate the subject.

Other Facebook users widely shared these sentiments. Another noted that:

It's not our problem; the problem is with our Education system! We have a lot to learn within Zambia. All we learn is history from other countries! Icalo ici! (this world)

Many more felt that European History had been elevated at the expense of local history. The youth were aggrieved that local history was missing from the school history curriculum in Zambia. One youth who keenly followed the centenary celebrations of the First World War in Zambia left a poignant comment.

After watching on TV the centenary celebrations in Mbala exposing all the battle fields and the historical facts about the WW1 in Zambia, I am tempted to ask the question: Who designed the history curriculum we followed in secondary school? The great mind went into European details and never made a hint on the Zambian connection. And I am left to wonder; shouldn't the Abercorn connection have made the

key point of departure on explaining the effects of the WW1? Apparently, I didn't do my secondary school in Mbala however I guess it must be really painful to learn history on WW1 in Mbala without any reference to its significance on the ground. That subject must be an academic 'miss' which should be corrected forthwith.

In addition to that comment, another person lamented that:

OK, I never knew this. Kaili (because) they concentrate on teaching us the battle of Mlatuzi and how old Nandi was instead of teaching us our own national history. Sure busy nama (with) Bismarck and Hitler when we know nothing of our own.

Commenting on the same post, another person complained that:

Instead of learning about Zambia/Mbala, it was all about Mussolini. It's not just history as a subject which had irrelevant material, also Geography. Instead of learning about Rice-farms in Kaputa, we spent the whole term learning about Canadian Prairies.

In agreement with this statement, one of the Facebook users commented that:

I learnt world history and Zambia in general but Zambia's contribution during the First World War was not mentioned anywhere. But today we are told how rich Zambia is regarding WW1. I am greatly disappointed.

Within the same thread, someone commented that;

They made us study about the treaties which were being signed, Hitler and Mussolini only to remove the relevant part on how they found themselves in Zambia, particularly Mbala and where the arms were thrown. Historians should bring back my school fees.

To achieve the vision of 2030, the 2013 *Zambian Curriculum Framework* aims to produce learners who can appreciate Zambia's ethnic cultures, customs and traditions, upholding national pride and unity (ZECF, 2013). There have been changes in how history is taught since the 20th century. This is because "there has been tremendous expansion of the scope of historical enquiry and it has been placed in the mainstream formal education sector; new histories like economic, rural, urban, social and cultural have emerged" (Manyane, 1999:1). However, the purpose of history as a school subject is also connected to contemporary notions of historical awareness and consciousness (Lee and Ashby, 2000; Seixas, 2012; Lee, 2011; Tambyah, 2017) rather than intuitive, memory-based understandings of the past. Teaching a national narrative helps to create patriotism (Christou, 2007). Patriotism can only flourish when citizens of a country engage with their history.

Suggestions on what should be included in the School History Curriculum of Zambia

Inclusion of local history

The study also sought to find out what kind of history the people wanted in the school history curriculum. The youth voice was very forthcoming in its suggestions on the history content. There was a consensus that since the syllabus was irrelevant and euro-centric, it needed to be revised. This was given credence by then President Lungu's call for curriculum reform after the centenary celebration of the First World War. One youth wrote:

The directive by HE President Edgar C. Lungu to have the secondary school syllabus reviewed is welcome... The syllabus coverage is too wide for the pupils to learn all themes in 3 years and also a lot of postcolonial history is neglected. It is not surprising to see pupils showing more interest in Civic Education and Geography than in history.

Another added that what was needed was a more practical history which spoke to local issues:

We need to make it more relevant and practical. Introduction of History project can be one of the ways through which our learners can learn a lot of things. We have a lot of undocumented historical figures such as Musa Kasonka, Anoya Zulu, Omelo Mumba, Edwin Imboela, Godfrey Ucar Chitalu, and Gen. Peter Zuze etc. Other than the history of personalities there is more to learn such as transport, football, traditional ceremonies etc. We need to invest in history as it pays off. Several states generate a lot of money as a result of historical tourism. We can learn great lessons from these.... Zambia has a lot of potential to reap from this sector.

Teachers did not shun these discussions on social media. They also participated and offered valuable insights on possible curriculum reform. One of the teachers posted on the teachers' page that learners should now learn the:

Origin of Lumpa church of Lenshina Mulenga, the rise of Kenneth Kaunda from 1964 to 1990, Mwamba Luchembe's coup, Chiluba, the seven wonders of Zambia; Kalambo falls, Kabwelume falls, Chishimba falls, Ing'ombe ilede, Luchele ng'anga foot step stone, Musonda falls, Luapula bank swamp, Zambezi river, Lake Bangweulu, the uprising of Adamson Mushala and what made Julia to demonstrate naked during the struggle for independence. It's not human to be learning European history and some African history but failing to explain our Zambian history. The system must change.

Another user said:

It's the learning syllabus that should change. Most of our children do not know much about our country, our liberation struggles etc. I feel it's time this information is fused in with the changes in time. It's pointless to keep learning about Homo-Habillis, Zinjanthropus etc, we learnt about them, but what value did it do to me as an individual? Nothing!!!! Unlike if I learn about Zambia, from the time it was Northern Rhodesia etc.

Yet another added that:

I think we should just teach an overview of European history and paying some attention to topics that concern us like Imperialism, the World Wars then teach our own history intensively. We can focus on our kingdoms or rather tribes for I don't believe they ended on declined. Then traditional ceremonies and contemporary history be included in the syllabus. What I agree with the president 100% is that history needs to be rewritten but most importantly that we should write our own history.

A concerned citizen also said that:

...I want my kids to learn and know more about African leaders not Bismarck!

The findings of this study indicate that a lot of information on national history was missing from the curriculum. The youth yearned for history tailored to the Zambian setting; they wanted personalities with whom they could identify. Atkinson (1970) noted that unless there is a radical rethinking of the traditional type of syllabus, history will not only die as a subject in the curriculum but will deserve to die. More recently, Arkell (2006) argued that, in most societies, the history curriculum has failed to help learners understand the process of change in relation to them.

The history syllabus should be made meaningful to young people. School children of all ages and abilities should face continuous challenges and the need to build on their efforts. But they must be able to perceive that what is being taught is relevant to their own lives and problems. Goksu and Somen (2019) have argued that local history should be included in history education so that students may investigate and learn more relevant geographies, form connections between past and present, and gain important life skills based on these connections. In support of this argument, Bentrovato (2017) noted that local history helps students to understand how these developments occur and how they affect our lives more effectively. History teachers must also include local history activities in history class curricula. Thus, it would be important for curriculum developers to design a history that has some local content. The challenge with the current history curriculum is that the local content in the school curriculum was mainly from the postcolonial period and a few nationalist figures. The teaching of national history in schools is a recurrent topic

of academic and public discussion across the globe (Phillips, 1998). Due to its important role in educating future generations, the content of the curriculum is a sensitive issue (Low-Beer, 2003).

A school history curriculum based on consultations

Stakeholders further suggested that consultation should be made among all stakeholders when designing a school history curriculum in Zambia. In one of the posts, it was indicated that technocrats should pay attention to the people's views about the history curriculum. Similarly, another Facebook user mentioned that they wished that the curriculum revision process was consultative enough to include the views of the youth. In addition to those sentiments, another Facebook user mentioned that:

Such consultations rarely involve low class stakeholders like us teachers, unfortunately. But again we need to dump the pity parties about how our opinions are ignored and find a way of getting more involved.

Just like their contemporaries outside academia, teachers felt their views were ignored during curriculum reform. Studies on curriculum development and implementation in Zambia indicate that even key stakeholders have been side-lined in curriculum development (Mulenga and Mwanza, 2019; Kabombwe and Mulenga, 2019). For instance, Chabatama (2012) argued that history teachers were not involved in the development of the history curriculum; they only received the syllabus with instructions on what to teach and discard. He argued further that the history of West Africa and Eastern Africa was removed from the curriculum at secondary schools. Yet, it was important to the learners' understanding of African History. De Coninck (2008) contested that the curriculum is the responsibility of all societal stakeholders. Curriculum and curriculum development, at first glance, appear to be of chief concern to educators, governments and parents, and both have relevance and impact on the development of communities and prosperity (Koskei, 2015).

This study's findings align with Tyler's model of curriculum development, which states that for a curriculum to be relevant, it should capture the purpose of education in society. If a curriculum does not do so, it becomes irrelevant. While the Zambian Curriculum hopes to produce learners connected to local and global history (CDC, 2013), the finding of this study indicates that the history curriculum connects them more to global history than to local one because much of the history content is foreign. Therefore, this study strongly argues that with the current content in the Zambian school history curriculum, the Zambian education system will not achieve the aspirations of the 2013 revised curriculum. It recommends revisiting the content to reflect continuity with the Zambian past and tell

a local story on global events. The history curriculum development should be viewed as a process by which meeting learners' needs leads to improving their learning outcomes. The curriculum must be a living document in constant flux and not stagnant. It must adapt to changes in the educational community and society in general. Only then will it be able to be an effective change agent in the educational process (Alsubaie, 2016).

Conclusion

In conclusion, generally, stakeholders were dissatisfied with the content of the school history curriculum in Zambia, arguing that it was irrelevant not only to their present life but also to the future they envisioned for themselves. The overall feeling was that the school history curriculum did not contain sufficient content on the local history in Zambia. They were particularly affronted at the silence on indigenous historical figures such as Alice Leshina, Adamson Mushala and Mainza Chona, among others. They lamented that many youths had no idea of Zambia's most basic aspects of their history. In essence, they felt like they were a lost generation. This is because European historical figures like Adolf Hitler, Vladimir Ilych Ulyanov (Lenin) and Otto von Bismarck were studied in great detail. Still, the same depth was not applied to Zambian historical figures whose accounts were based on rumours and speculation. For instance, Alice Lenshina and Adamson Mushala had been reduced to exciting rumours in history.

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