

EXAMINING THE USE OF TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGY IN TEACHING OF CIVIC EDUCATION IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NCHELENGE DISTRICT, ZAMBIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the use of transformative pedagogy in Civic Education in selected secondary schools in Nchelenge district of Luapula Province focusing on teacher competency. The study was purely qualitative in which phenomenological research design was adopted. During data collection, individual interviews and focus group discussions were used as data collection instruments. Data was collected from three secondary schools in which a homogenous purposive sampling technique was employed to select 6 civic education teachers and 3 heads of Departments (HODs) for social sciences. When selecting 30 pupils that were taking Civic Education, convenient sampling techniques were employed. Individual interviews were conducted with teachers and HODs while focused group discussions were administered with pupils. All interviews were transcribed and were coded for themes.

Analysis of the findings established that participants failed to link transformative pedagogy to civic education. Analysis showed that teachers were not competent enough in the use of transformative pedagogy implying that the practical part was left out during teaching and learning processes. In other words, hands-on was poor. The study established that despite being familiar with active methods that are learner-centred approaches, teachers still use traditional methods that fail to transform learners into socially analytical people instead widens the gap between school and community. The researcher recommends that reflective and objective teaching has to be implemented and emphasized, simply put the need for a change of teaching role from a teaching-centered to learner-centered' active learning approach. Secondly, there is a need to develop teacher assessment capacity in a competency-based approach for transformative pedagogy.

Key Words: Transformative pedagogy, Active learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Transformative pedagogy is a philosophy of education that emerged from a legacy of radical social thoughts and progressive educational movements that inspired the linking of schooling to democratic principles of society and to transformative social actions in the interest of oppressed communities (Sen in Dared et al, 2008:3). It dates back from Freire's conscientization in his famous pedagogy of the oppressed, Dewey's pragmatism of experiential learning, Giroux's critical pedagogy among other social learning theorists. The process of transformative learning is based on the transformative theory of Mezirow (1981) describes it as constructive orientation where learners interpret and reinterpret their experience to make meaning of their learning.

Transformative pedagogy as a form of praxis has a moral and social commitment to bringing about personal and social transformations by making connections between teaching and learning and living (Farren, 2016). Farren further postulates that transformative pedagogy encompasses various

essential aspects with other design frameworks such as critical pedagogy that supports a person in developing an in-depth understanding of the world and develop the ability to perceive contradictions between social and political realities. The concept of transformative pedagogy combines the theory to practice, and this is critical if we are to progress the education system that centers on developing lifelong learning skills. Muleya (2015) argued that having a practical and active pedagogy approach in civic education can help in the production of a democratic citizenry capable of social transformation. Therefore, the study found it significant to examine the competency of teachers in the use of transformative pedagogy in Civic Education.

Statement of the Problem

Most schools are essentially undemocratic institutions and approaches to Civic Education that emphasize inquiry, collaboration, reasoning, and problem-solving have faced substantial resistance from school administrations, teachers, and community leaders for many years to get civic learning that includes the practice of service-learning and community activism that stimulate transformational, reflective thinking, justice-seeking mind and active participation in collaborative, a real-world project to activate civic action to transform personal, social and civic identity. From the background given, it is evident that transformative pedagogy can initiate such civic learning. However, from the literature reviewed, it remains unclear on the competency of teachers in the use of transformative pedagogy in the teaching of Civic Education to shape and develop effective means of cultivating a range of citizenship skills in young ones. Thus, the study sought to examine the use of transformative pedagogy in Civic Education in selected secondary schools in Nchelenge District Luapula Zambia.

Research Objective

To explore teachers' competency in the use of transformative pedagogy in the teaching of Civic Education.

2. METHODOLOGY

This research used a constructivist and interpretive paradigm. This paradigm emphasizes the interaction between the researcher and the participants as well as the use of open-ended questions to allow participants to share their views (Creswell, 2009). The study was purely qualitative in which phenomenological research design was employed. Creswell (2012) noted that phenomenological design is a descriptive and interpretive study of how individuals experience and understand a phenomenon. In the process of attaining participants' perception, experience, and understanding about a phenomenon, phenomenological design enabled the researcher to employ different methods of data collection strategies that include interviews, observation, and document analysis. The sample size of the study had respondents distributed as follows: thirty (30) pupils from three selected secondary schools, six (6) Civic Education teachers two from each school, and three (3) heads of social science departments one from each school. The study employed individual interviews and focus group discussions. Qualitative data sets were coded and transcribed into subthemes and were thematically analysed.

3. PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Below were responses from teachers, HoDs, and pupils from individual interviews and focus group discussions on the competency of teachers in the use of transformative pedagogies in Civic Education. Emerged subthemes from this objective were presented as follows.

Understanding of the concept of Transformative Pedagogies

Teachers and learners were asked to explore the concept of transformative pedagogy. The definitions for Transformative pedagogy were given according to their understanding. When defining transformative, a male teacher from one of the three secondary schools selected eluded that:

Transformative pedagogy is the method of teaching that can bring change to teachers, learners, and the community at large; he further went on by explaining that it is the pedagogy that is innovative and empowers learners to critically examine their knowledge and attitude with a goal of developing self-reflection. Transformative pedagogy stimulates pupils to become active citizens for sustainable development to be accomplished.

(Individual Interview with teachers, 2021)

Among the teachers, a female teacher from a different school conceptualized transformative pedagogy;

As a method of teaching that brings a change in both teachers and learners, she continued by saying transformative pedagogy is the best and most effective way of knowledge impartation and later it can give or produce well define community.

(Individual interview with teacher, 2021)

In trying to find out learners' understanding of the term transformative pedagogy it was a very big challenge to give a meaningful definition. A male grade 12 pupil who participated in a focus group stipulated that;

Transformative pedagogy is the method of teaching that teachers use when teaching, it makes us pass the exam. Our teacher used questions and answers and group work during lesson development.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021)

A grade 10 female pupil came out strongly by saying;

We don't understand what it means by the term transformative pedagogy, she requested guidance and clarification.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021).

Further, another male grade 11 participant from a different focus group of learners responded that transformative pedagogy;

As a way of making us pass and to change our behaviour to become good citizens., he went further by saying teachers rarely use methods that make us be motivated, among them are group work, assignments, and question answers.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021)

Pupils had little idea and understanding about transformative pedagogy despite a few tries as was observed during focus group discussions.

The linkage between Transformative Pedagogy and Civic Education

The notion of reflective and objective teaching has been playing a role in influencing the teaching and learning processes, hence transformative pedagogy is the key to bringing about change in learners through the learning of civic education. In a quest to find out the linkage or connection between the two concepts;

One of the HODS in giving the linkage between civic education and transformative pedagogy started by defining the two concepts that,

Pedagogy is the art of teaching which guides the teacher to teach effectively and be in a position to interact with learners and the community at large, later, he related these pedagogies to civic education as a way of informing citizens on how to be active.

(Individual interview HoDs, 2021)

On the other hand, a grade 12 female pupil linked transformative pedagogies and civic education in this manner,

Pedagogies are means of educating the citizens for them to change and be productive in society; he further explained that even though I don't have much idea on transformative pedagogies, I have a crew on the two terms. Transformative pedagogies bring change while civic education as a subject plays a role in changing a human being in terms of their behaviour such as work culture, language to be used, and interaction with other members of the society.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021)

Other views came from a female teacher among the three schools, she stipulated that

Civic education empowers human being to be well informed and grant the opportunity to change the community and the country at large in terms of development, she further added by saying it is a vital part of any democracy, therefore, suitable methods should be used in order to have citizens who are well informed and who are to be in a good position to defend their country no matter how stiff the condition or situation may be.

(Individual interview with teachers, 2021)

As the matter of fact, civic education is the art of teaching citizens how to be active members, responsible, and be able to bring change. It is a vision of social change that leads to a harmony with the environment and the citizens.

To support the above statement, one HOD defined transformative pedagogy as

Suitable methods of teaching the learners how to be active and be able to analyze issues affecting the country and world at large. Therefore, civic education has to be taught by implementing those pedagogies that are suitable to bring changed human beings who can bring the well-defined world with peace and dignity.

(Individual interview with HoD, 2021)

Civic education means all the processes that affect people's beliefs, commitment, and action as members or prospective members of the communities. In a similar manner, one male teacher stated that;

There is a strong linkage between civic education and transformative pedagogy. Civic is the self-development of the citizens, it involves a deeply formative and lifelong process whose goal is for each person. He further stated that the good

education learners receive will make them become good citizens who are actively engaged in national affairs in line to bring development. He ended up by saying that, civic education is a driver for both personal and political development.

(Individual interview with teachers, 2021)

All in all, progress can only be realized when societies develop the quality of citizens and people. As Mill stated that good government depends on the quality of the human beings that compose it.

Competencies in the use of transformative pedagogy

Teaching reflectively and objectively is required when teaching civic education with related issues leading to development. It's not all about teacher-pupil interaction every day in a classroom but the quality of that interaction matters. As competency is the set of demonstrable characteristics and skills that enable to improve the efficiency of performance of a job, a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills behaviour, and values used to improve performance. Hence, the pupil-teacher relationship has to be strong. Connecting to the above statement, one female pupil came out by saying;

In school we don't understand the relationship between male teachers and learners, especially us girls in the name of relationship we are being abused by male teacher's hence poor performance in class, sometimes there is no that trusting relationship with learners in order to create a safe, positive and productive learning environment. She continued by saying if their needs are not honoured, they will not help or guide when there is a problem.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021)

However, one male teacher expressed different views contrary to the claims of pupils as he alluded that, eluded

Teachers are in a good position to make a good trusting relationship with learners but to the disadvantaged part, learners especially girls have corrupt minds, what they think all about are sexual issues therefore, in this situation if teachers don't show interest, these pupils show the sign of abandonment hence it becomes a big challenge for a Civic Education teacher who knows the impact of these relationships.

(Individual interview with teachers, 2021)

Indeed, this is a great challenge, especially in rural schools. Away from the teacher-pupil relationship, among the group of learners who were interviewed one grade 11 male pupil stipulated that;

In some situations we lucky great and motivating teachers who are willing to listen to our problems and needs to enhance performance, he continued by saying some of us it is not our desire to have problems, but the situation and the environment were we are in contributes to our daily problems, so teachers should put us in their shoes so that they can produce a changed person for the better generation.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021)

Knowing of learners is among the teacher competencies, it is a broad category that incorporates knowledge of the cognitive, social, and emotional development of learners. it includes an understanding of how students learn at a given development level and how learning in a specific subject is typically progressing like learning progressions or trajectories awareness that learners

have individual needs and abilities and an understanding that instruction should be tailored to meet each learners needs. One of the HODS eloquently stipulated that;

The sad part in the teaching and learning is that a good number of teachers fail to understand the nature of the learners we are teaching eventually we fail to achieve our goal in changing our learners into meaningful creatures with the potential to develop, he added by saying in class there are fast and slow learners, those who are intelligent and moderate. Hence, if the knowledge of learners is left out, then we make our work to be difficult.

(Individual interview with HoDs, 2021)

Dedication to teaching usually lacks in a good number of teachers, as someone is dedicated for her or his job, he or she has the love and passion for work, which includes a commitment to learners' success in this manner teachers and learners should be always in situation willing to help and give time for each other in the teaching and learning processes.

To back up the above statement, a female grade 12 pupil eluded that;

Actions speak loud than words, he continued by saying just by looking we are able to tell the teachers who have passion for the subject, he gave an example of teachers who gives notes to write to their fellows and later it happens that when he/she comes will jump into another topic leaving the notes unexplained in this manner how can we be motivated. They even contribute to poor performance.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021)

Engaging learners in the learning and teaching processes become the focal point of effective teaching and learning which was not the case as expressed by female grade twelve pupils. Similarly, one teacher stated;

We fail to engage learners fully in the lesson development due to the time limit against the civic syllabus, he continued by saying the method of teaching is more affected by the timetable and the syllabus coverage.

(Focus group discussion with learners, 2021)

Qualitative data sets from individual interviews and focus group discussions confirmed that teachers are less competent in employing transformative pedagogy in the teaching and learning process. They still rely on traditional methods that lack adequate active and interactive methods to enable learners to engage in service-learning and communal experiences that underpin theory and practice. Participants had some challenges in terms of linking civic education and transformative in that they could not bring out aspects that underpin transformative pedagogy and how that can contribute to developing active citizenship in learners through the teaching of civic education.

4. DISCUSSIONS

Understanding the concept of Transformative pedagogy

Regarding the use of transformative pedagogy, the study has revealed that a suitable number of teachers were familiar with these methods of teaching such as debate, group discussion field trips, and many more. However, teachers were still using the traditional way of teaching which is the teacher-centered approach. It has been noted that to achieve active citizenship in learners' teachers need to explore and involve learners in their acquisition of knowledge. This was clearly evidenced from the response of the teacher on the same statement that was probing on the use of transformative pedagogy. According to the response from the teachers, a respectable number of

challenges were brought out which hinders them from applying suitable pedagogy in transforming learners. This purely indicates that hands-on is lacking when teaching civic education. This shows that no matter how learners will learn civic education theoretically it will be very difficult for them to be transformed into active citizens. As the matter of fact, it is not possible to transform learning without first transforming learners into the empowered self-benefiting agent.

Transformative pedagogy is not only focused on the development of student understanding of alternative perspectives and experiences on an individual basis, but it also expands their awareness of how societal forces impact people (Johnson-baily and Alfred, 2006). These analyses include consciousness. This process marries contemplation of the subject matter with self-scrutiny. On the other part, transformative pedagogy assumes that student is active learners in the classroom, professors frequently use strategies such as collaborative learning, problem-based instruction, discussions, or role-play to promote engagement (Cummins and Sayers 1997) this differs from the “banking model” of teaching (Freire, 1970) in which instructors mostly rely on lectures and consider students primary recipients of information in the education process.

From the above supporting scholars, it can be concluded that teachers of civic education are using the banking model of teaching despite knowing suitable methods of teaching which can help in the transformation of learners into active citizens. Transformative pedagogy remains among the key approaches to be adopted in school and classroom environments in particular as it is not only focused on the development of learners understanding perspective, but it allows them to identify problems, analyze and be able to come up with solutions for the betterment of everyone.

Teacher Competencies

As defined earlier on, competency is knowledge, skills, and specification which can cause one person to act better not considering his special performance in that job, UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2000). On the part of competency, it was found that a good number of teachers were not all good in the way they interact with the learners during teaching and learning processes. Learners indicated that teachers fail to give them space during the teaching and learning processes and in situations where learners need clarification, teachers in most cases ignore in the name of time. The other finding noted was teachers not listening to the problems of learners forgetting the environment they come from. To support the above points on competencies, Bansal (2009) argues that developing a process of teaching with a more critical understanding of active learning requires the teacher to train themselves to understand and frequently evaluate the theoretical and philosophical nature of the subject. Civic Education is a complex field of study, and it requires a teacher or a lecturer who is well-grounded in issues such as critical pedagogy, reflective reasoning, service-learning, and inquiry learning (Muleya, 2015). Hence, transformative pedagogies should be implemented so that teachers and learners as well can be transformed in an effective manner for the betterment of everyone. Therefore, Civic Education requires a competent teacher to effectively manage the subject and the learners effectively using interactive methods in the teaching and learning process.

Taylor (2000) identifies six conditions for effective learning, which are consistent with civic learning and teaching; motivation, confidence, a clear idea of what is to be learned, a plain for sequential learning, appraisal, and feedback and transfer. He believed that schools should develop student motivation towards achieving their personal goals, avoiding segregation and isolation, and facilitating integration into groups or society they belong to through learning channels. Moreover, students should be aware of what the learning possibilities are and be confident of and believe in

their learning abilities to meet the schooling system requirement. It is the teacher's task to illustrate the learning process and to encourage student participation in developing understanding.

Freire (1987:33) suggest "for transformation, we need first to understand the social context of teaching and then ask how this content distinguishes liberating education from traditional methods". From the argument given by Freire, it can be concluded that even if teachers are good or are in a position of using transformative pedagogy in the teaching of civic education minus them being competent enough in teacher-pupil interaction and class management it simply means implanting active citizenship is far from being achieved. This entails that both transformative pedagogy and teacher competency should be moving side by side for learners to be transformed into active citizenship.

On the other hand, it has been discovered from the findings that teachers are not competent enough in handling practical lessons in civic education as pupils looked surprised to hear that debate is among the teaching method which civic teachers should use to transform these learners to become active citizens. Cecchim (2003) argues that civic education help to equip people with knowledge, skills, and understanding to play an effective role in public life. He further adds that civic education encourages people to take interest in typical and controversial issues and to engage in discussion and debate. However, this was not the case in some of the secondary schools as such methods are displaced with a lack of enough periods.

Vygotsky argued that pupils' cognitive function for example problem solving is internalized from social interaction between pupils and teachers and between pupils of varying capabilities and that by engaging in these interactions, pupils develop their own 'lexican' that enable them to direct, control, and plan their activities during problem-solving, finally, pupil internalize this as inner speech developing a vocabulary that can draw on to direct their action (Vygotsky, in Bershon 1992:37).

If teachers are in an outstanding position to guide learners in terms of practical and theory knowledge useful for social transformation, there is a need for teachers to be knowledgeable enough on the integration of theory and practice, but this has been a big challenge in schools' curricula. Constructivism emphasizes the active role pupils have in constructing knowledge. Vygotsky considered the social environment to be critical for learning. A key concept in his theory is the zone of proximal development, this is defined as; the distance between actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. Effective development of competence also requires a shift in the leadership for learning from teachers to learners it is a profound shift from teacher-led transition, which is by fostering learners' agency, leadership, and ownership of their own learning-based curricula promote learners' intrinsic motivation, fulfillment, and enjoyment of learning. It recognizes that learners have to learn and not to be made to learn learners have to be fulfilled in learning rather than obliged in learning they have to be intrinsically motivated to learn.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The conclusion drawn from the results obtained showed minimal levels of teachers' competency in the use of transformative pedagogy in secondary schools. Such pedagogical approaches which are investigative in nature and problem solving such as fieldwork, guest speaker, debates, interview, project, and trigger films are lacking. It was established that hands-on is missing in the

teaching and learning of civic education instead of traditional methods which are theoretically based receive great recognition.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Since it was revealed that teachers are still using the traditional way of teaching, the change of teaching from a teaching-centred to a learner-centred' active learning approach may be substantial to bring an inquiry problem-based activity learning strategy.
2. Continues Profession Development programs has to be initiated in schools and training opportunities to develop teachers' confidence as well the ministry of education to provide workshops and short courses to teachers and members of the community to address a big gap between the school and the community.

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