

## Adapting Fadel's Four-Dimensional Education Model in Teaching and Learning Civic Education In 21<sup>st</sup> Century Zambia

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### Abstract

This study focused on contextualizing Charles Fadel's four-dimensional model of education to teaching and learning Civic Education in secondary schools in of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Zambia. The study confirmed the importance of Fadel's four-dimensional model of education in teaching and learning Civic Education in secondary schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Zambia. All the four interlinked educational components in the model are crucial in teaching and learning of Civic Education in secondary schools. The study recommends the review of Civic Education curriculum course that secondary school teacher training institutions offer in colleges and universities in Zambia to incorporate the 21<sup>st</sup> teaching and learning methods as espoused in the four-dimensional education model; and the need to periodically review how methods used in teaching and learning Civic Education help prepare learners for civic agency, give them confidence to vote, and engage with their communities voluntarily as these are the tenets of the 21<sup>st</sup> teaching and learning of this epoch.

**Key Terms:** Civic Education, Teaching, learning, four-dimensional, and education.

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### 1. Introduction

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterized by rapid technological advancement. Lifestyles and ways of interacting with people have changed significantly due to the advent of digital technologies that have turned lives from analogue. As a result, a range of international, national, localized technology and information literacy frameworks have emerged to provide outcome benchmarks for the needed curricular reforms. More notable in the field of education are the efforts to incorporate educational activities into the digital world. Through education, many can develop various potentials, intelligences, personality skills and character attributes that enable them adapt to the changes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Fajri, et al., 2020).

This realisation has numerous benefits considering the domains that influence the process and outcomes of education. For this reason, Charles Fadel initiated a four-dimensional education model which shows what learning and teaching in 21<sup>st</sup> century ought to achieve. The 'four-dimensional education' (knowledge, skills, character and meta-learning) has rejuvenated the teaching and learning process with clear expectations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Trilling and Fadel, 2009). Fadel proposed an improvement in human education that enables mass personalisation of learning. In Chu (2017), Fadel contended that younger generations need to receive training that enables them to meet tomorrow's challenges. This corroborates with what Banda and Mpolomoka (2018) advanced that "in Zambia, decontextualized education provision has equipped some people with knowledge and skills not applicable in their own communities. Education viewed in this sense delineates people from their own communities." It is worth noting that the 'four-dimensional education' (knowledge, skills, character and meta-learning) are directly linked to each other.

This study contextualised the four-dimensional education model by Charles Fadel to the Zambian situation. As a democratic State, Zambia needs an education system or program that provides awareness of key ideals of democratic governance (Magasu, et al., 2020) even as economic and social development is promoted. The study examined how the teaching of Civic Education in Zambian secondary schools can tap from this model in preparation for a whole-round citizenry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

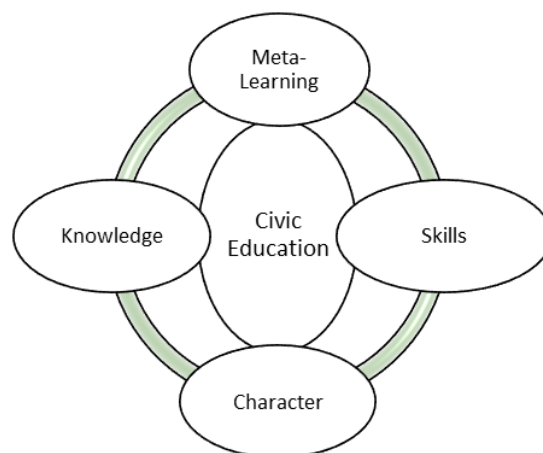
## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Several scholars (Kuhn, 2006, Tovmasyan and Thoma, 2008; McCowan, 2009; Eurydice Report, 2017; Muleya, 2015; 2018; 2019; Magasu, et al., 2020, 2022) perceive Civic Education as a subject that provides civic knowledge, skills and values or disposition or virtues to individuals. Civic knowledge is concerned with the content citizens ought to know that develops political attitudes and arouse active community engagement (Branson and Quigely, 1998; Owen, 2015; Lind, 2019). Civic skills refer to citizens' ability to engage effectively in public affairs in a liberal State (Branson and Quigely, 1998). Hinde (2008) explains that civic skills enable individual's effective reasoning without being coerced or aided. Many Civic Education scholars use 'civic values' or 'dispositions' to refer to character change which one acquires in teaching and learning Civic Education (Halstead and Pike, 2006; Haniza, 2014; Mainde, et al. 2021; Pingul, 2015; and Muntengwa, 2020). Civic values bring out civic attitudes, such as public spiritedness, civility, respect for the rule of law, critical mindedness, and willingness to listen and negotiate (Branson and Quigley, 1998); that are required in building up strong and transformed democratic communities (Muleya, 2015).

The three thematic areas in Civic Education are expected outcomes in line with Charles Fadel's first three components (knowledge, skills, and character) also categorised in four-dimensional education (Trilling and Fadel, 2009). However, it is not clear how teaching and learning Civic Education in Zambia incorporates Fadel's fourth (meta-learning) dimensional education that prepares students for the present and future in all job prospects and personal choices in their lifetimes. Fadel's fourth-educational dimension enables students to make use of knowledge, skills, and character attributes to succeed in lifelong learning environments. Meta-learning focuses on developing metacognition for improving the application of knowledge, skills and character qualities in realms beyond the immediate context in which they were learned. For effective teaching and learning of Civic Education, there is need to examine and apply all four components in Fadel's model serve in developing a well-informed and active citizenry.

## 2. Conceptual Framework

Teaching and learning Civic Education aims at instilling in students three distinctive characteristics namely: civic knowledge, civic skills and civic disposition (Lind, 2019). What is more in this subject is that to produce a whole-round individual, hence this study posits acquisition of knowledge, imparting skills, character change, and meta-learning to be guiding frameworks in teaching and learning Civic Education in Zambia. Through this approach, it may be deduced that teaching and learning Civic Education must contain four dimensions which are directly interlinked as shown in the diagram below.



*Source: Researchers; October, 2022*

This framework proposes that teaching and learning of Civic Education should focus on instilling knowledge, skills, character and meta-learning into learners. On one hand, Civic knowledge accords learners the opportunity to discern key information by following their political structure; and on the other, makes them become well-informed and active participating citizens.

Civic skills provide learners with critical thinking, analysing issues and creative abilities. These are concerned

with what graduates do after having received the necessary knowledge while the training program. This means that skills development supersedes the acquisition of knowledge.

In addition, teaching and learning Civic Education helps in modifying students' character. It can be said that meta-learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century directs teaching and learning of Civic Education as an end product. Since education is supposed to prepare students with life-long skills useful in the present and future, Civic Education should adequately prepare learners how they can make use of civic knowledge, skills, and values that are embedded in its content.

All the four-dimensional education in teaching and learning Civic Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are supposed to be interlinked. This is useful in the preparation of individual learners for the community's present and future commitment.

### **3. Description of Charles Fadel's Four-Dimensional Education**

Charles Fadel is known to be the global education thought leader and futurist, who authored and founded the center for curriculum redesign. He is the co-author of the 'four-dimensional education' (knowledge, skills, character and meta-learning) which has rejuvenated the teaching and learning process with clear expectations for 21<sup>st</sup> century (Trilling and Fadel, 2009). Fadel is driven by education as the preeminent mechanism to profoundly improve the human condition and embraces technology to progressively enable mass personalisation of learning. His call for educational reforms, according to Chu (2017), is necessitated by his belief that younger generations need to receive training that enables them to meet the challenges brought about by technological advancements and changes in the global economic structure.

#### **3.1 Knowledge**

The term knowledge is illusive and can be defined differently by scholars of diverse professional orientations. Agarwal (2017) describes knowledge as the "awareness" and "understanding" of particular aspects of "reality" which require three necessary and sufficient conditions, for it to be defined as "justified true belief" (Bolisani and Bratianu, 2018). The concept has two key aspects, external and external conditions.

In 1893, a committee of ten established the knowledge discipline standards in secondary education in the United States (Griffin and Care, 2015). The purpose of this development as recorded in Fadel and Trilling (2015) was to define the standardized curriculum requirements for all public secondary schools. To standardise the curriculum, Griffin and Care (2015) provided a list of subjects that can help facilitate this knowledge guide. Some may argue that the reason for our current knowledge structure in education is that many concepts are so complex that to teach them effectively they must first be broken down into manageable chunks (Fadel and Trilling, 2015). Globally, Mathematics, Science, Languages, Social Studies, Citizenship Education, and Arts are disciplines that take up most of the available time.

The advent of the Information Age and participatory governance brought in new knowledge produced and the ease of accessing this knowledge has expanded exponentially through the use of new technologies and the promotion of participatory governance systems around the globe. Thus, it is crucial to bring out the interrelatedness of these knowledge areas to help uncover a logical and effective progression for learning that achieves a deep understanding of participatory governance in Zambia. The components of education like teaching and learning the subject Civic Education in secondary schools need to reshape the learning goals. There should be shift from focusing on covering all of the curricula, to understanding the key aspects in a meaningful and holistic way of developing a learner in a least restrictive environment. This will improve comprehension, retention, and the learning experience of students about the practices of the local communities they live in (Oeberst, et al, 2016). In Civic Education, each lesson taught has a many values, partly it is to derive the intrinsic value that requires students to engage with the material and internalize it, and partly it is meant to enable them engage with communities (as citizens). This is opposed to trying to indoctrinate them with a sole promise of Civic Education's instrumental value.

All students, no matter what they later choose to specialize in, have the foundational elements that enable them to intelligently engage with specialists, by grounding their thinking in the concepts and processes central to each discipline. Each subject area taught in educational institutions has three aspects of value: practical, cognitive, and emotional. The practical aspect requires students to acquire the concepts and meta-concepts, thus according them the opportunity to internalise them through acute methods. To a great extent, they achieve this by interrogating

and using tools relevant to jobs of the future. While the cognitive aspect enhances higher-level thinking such as critical thinking, creativity, and character development which are integrated into the school curriculum (different subjects) for the harmonious development of each learner; the emotional subject area has inherent beauty and power to help the student understand the world (Fadel and Trilling, 2015) in which they live and/ or intend to occupy.

### 3.2 Skills

Skills refer to citizens' ability to analyse, evaluate, take and defend their positions on public issues (Mainde and Chola, 2020); and the ability of every individual to solve problems (Lind, 2019). Education skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the lenses of Fadel include; Learning and Innovation Skills (Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Creativity and Innovation, Communication and Collaboration); Information, Media and Technology Skills (Information Literacy, Media Literacy, Communications, and Technology Literacy); and Life and Career Skills (Flexibility and Adaptability, Initiative and Self-Direction, Social and Cross-Cultural Skills, Productivity and Accountability and Leadership and Responsibility (Payne, 1999; Fadel, 2008).

Educational skills needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century include: global awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy, and health literacy. These help one visualise both what work will look like in the future and how thoughtful educators are preparing children to thrive in tomorrow's workplaces (Trilling and Fadel, 2009). This calls for a unique approach in the education system from curriculum development all through implementation to the evaluation stage. This is because the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are full of interesting examples illustrating both what work will look like in the years ahead and how thoughtful educators are preparing children to thrive in tomorrow's workplaces. Students are to be prepared for jobs and technologies that are not yet in existence and to solve problems that are unknown to humanity yet. This means that education programs should prepare students for harmonious core existence with nature in today's and tomorrow's world. This resonates well with what Banda and Mpolomoka (2018: 28) posit:

“Institutions must have a heart for the people and not just concentrate on educating students and pupils who end up feeling delineated up on graduating. They must be educated and trained to go back and serve the underserved communities with a view of contributing to their welfare. All this can only work if it starts from the institutions where people are engaged. Doing so will allow institutions to produce holistic graduates who are educated and trained to serve and not to be served.”

The 21<sup>st</sup> century instructional activities should stimulate creativity among education beneficiaries. According to Fadel and Trilling (2015), creativity is traditionally considered to be a directly involved learning outcome whose effects are a wide range of knowledge and skills, such as scientific thinking, entrepreneurship and design thinking. Educational programs must provoke the minds of students to invert objects that have never been in existence for an improved standard of living. Mainde, et al (2021) study revealed problem-based learning which is more likely to encourage students to think creatively than paper and pencil exercises in which there is only one right answer.

According to Fadel and Trilling (2015), the 21<sup>st</sup> century education should embrace critical thinking where an intellectually disciplined process of actively and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analysing, synthesizing, and evaluating information from observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, and communication, as a guide to belief and action. This can come in many different forms, from an explicit curriculum to projects that involve interpreting information, taking multiple perspectives, discerning patterns, and grasping abstract ideas.

Communication is another important skill to acquire and exhibit in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Chu (2017) counsels that education must prepare a student for public speaking, giving instructions, advising, building relationships, and resolving conflicts. An educated person has active listening, clear thinking, and writing skills. A well-trained individual does not only descend instructional orders instead can listen and make sense of the information around.

In Zambia, the Education Curriculum Framework (2013) responds ideally to this call with its emphasis on expected curriculum competencies that learners need to acquire; communication skills (oral and written), mathematical skills, Information and Communications Technology Skills, Scientific Skills and Pre-Vocational and Life Skills (MESVTEE, 2013) as indicated in 'Sustainable Development Goal 9'. Seeing that these skills drive human activities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, learners need to be well-equipped with them to access, manage,

integrate, evaluate and create reasonable information.

### **3.3 Character**

Bialik et al., (2015) hold that character education is about the acquisition and strengthening of virtues (qualities), values (ideals and concepts), and the capacity to make wise choices for a well-rounded life and a thriving society. It encompasses; attitudes, behaviours, dispositions, mindset, personality, temperament, values, beliefs, and social and emotional skills (Perkins and Timmerman, 2018; Fadel and Trilling, 2015). Education for character development results in mindfulness, curiosity, courage, resilience, ethics, and leadership.

Comparatively, Brown and Ryan (2003) contend that mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention to purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally, to the unfolding of experiences moment-by-moment. Fadel emphasises that mindfulness training needs to enhance attention and focus, and improve memory, self-acceptance, self-management skills, and self-understanding. Persons that exhibit this feature have self-awareness, vision, interconnectedness, empathy, sensibility, patience, acceptance, appreciation, and spirituality.

In addition, Fadel and Trilling (2015) highlight other principal features of character education as curiosity (exploration, passion, self-direction) and courage (bravery, determination, fortitude). Education for character should equip learners with the ability to act despite uncertainty and provides resilience to overcome obstacles and succeed where others in their circumstances could not (Luthar, et al, 2000).

Character education involves education for ethics which hinges on preconceived ideas about moral reasoning from pre-conventional (obedience and punishment, self-interest orientations), through conventional (interpersonal accord and conformity, authority and social-order maintaining), to post-conventional (social contract orientation, universal ethical principles (Fadel and Trilling, 2015). There must be traits of kindness, loyalty, honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, virtue, love, generosity, charity, devotion, and belonging present in an educated person. This aid in building leaders who are confident and compassionate in contributing to their communities as they serve ethically. As one of the elements of character education, leadership according to Chu (2017) is about responsibility, abnegation, accountability, selflessness, teamwork, mentorship, commitment, goal orientation, consistency, self-reflection, dependability, and reliability.

### **3.4 Meta-learning**

Scholars like Fadel and Bialik (2015) describe meta-learning as the fourth dimension of education that can help all students with the varied tasks of learning in the present and the future, as well as all of the jobs and personal choices individuals make during their lifetimes. It set students up to succeed in lifelong, self-directed learning, in the productive careers they may choose, and in continuing to grow throughout their lives. Fadel and Trilling (2015) demonstrate the reason for developing metacognition for improving the application of knowledge, skills, and character qualities in realms beyond the immediate context in which they were learned. Meta-concepts are concepts that are inherently overarching across the discipline and sometimes beyond, other disciplines, rather than limited to a given subject itself. There is a need to design an education framework in which students are accorded the privilege to practice reflection, learn about their learning, and internalize a growth mindset that encourages them to strive and learn how to adapt their learning and behaviour based on their goals. This is because most of people's lives will be spent out of school and will require internal motivation to continue growing and developing to fulfil life desires and counter the challenges faced by the society.

## **4. Fadel's Educational Model in Teaching and Learning Civic Education in Zambia**

In Zambia, the introduction of Civic Education in 2003 in secondary schools was aimed at providing learners with knowledge, skills, and values for democratic dispensation (Muleya, 2015). The institution of higher learning Civic Education Curriculum in Zambia aims to improve students with abilities and practices designed to enhance the effective dissemination of governance content in the community.

To produce a whole-round individual, the teaching and learning of Civic Education should interlink Fadel's four-dimensional education model. For Browne (2013), the teaching methods used become essential tools to enhance effective teaching and learning of Civic Education. Participatory and interactive methods are best-received and appear to deliver better and longer-term results (Katowa and Mukwato, 2019). These methods should provoke all students after acquiring knowledge, and foundational elements (skills) to intelligently engage with specialists in

a civility way (character) to contribute or seek guidance on how to survive (meta-learning) future hurdles. According to Fadel and Trilling (2015), each subject area or knowledge taught/acquired in education institutions has three aspects of value: practical, cognitive, and emotional. These have a direct interrelationship in the development of the individual learner.

The practical aspect requires students to apply the concepts, tools, experiences, and topics of the subject in their everyday lives and for projected or unseen challenges in the future. In schools, every subject has expected outcomes and competencies. Companies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century world expect to engage employees who are not only smart and academic competent (reading and writing), instead those who lead teams, communicate effectively to partners, come up with new ways to solve problems, and effectively navigate an increasingly digital world (Winthrop, 2020). Knowledge acquired in class influence one's career through the actualisation of theories into practical skills while one is aware of the costs and benefits of using such skills in long life situations (Trilling and Fadel, 2009).

During the 21<sup>st</sup> century education, Civic Education tutors and learners need to acquire knowledge and skills that harness the power of digital technologies in widening their opportunities for learning, communication, collaboration, and knowledge creation. Even though Winthrop's (2020) study justified the need to incorporate the 21<sup>st</sup> skills in Civic Education programs in America. Zambia can tap from this study where schools need to help students develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills alongside academic competencies, driven in large part by frequent reports of employers unsatisfied with the skills of recent school graduates. While the cognitive aspect enhances higher-level thinking such as critical thinking, creativity, and character development. On top of content knowledge and thinking skills, Civic Education students are also expected to develop adequate soft skills that equip them with the readiness to adapt to more challenging working environments, manage heavy workloads, meet stringent deadlines, as well as interact and work with their counterparts in achieving a mutually agreed goal (Chu, 2017).

Further, the emotional subject area has inherent beauty and power to help understand the world (Fadel and Trilling, 2015). Open-ended, problem-based learning is more likely to encourage students to think creatively than paper and pencil exercises in which there is only one right answer (Mainde, et al, 2021). Fadel's third dimension gives a rhythm to Zambia's education system (MOE, 1996: 5) where education should help in, "appreciating Zambia's ethnic cultures, customs, and traditions and upholding national pride, sovereignty, peace, freedom, and independence". These features are embedded in Fadel's third-dimensional education (character). All the four-dimensional are anchored on a learner-centered learning approach where learners are actively engaged during the teaching and learning time (MESVTEE, 2013, Mainde, et al., 2021). These methods help learners to acquire knowledge, encourage them to reflect, think and do rather than reproduce from rote learning and also mould them to be responsible citizens in today's and tomorrow's communities.

Although Magasu et al. (2020) argue that the teaching of Civic Education should expose the learners to real-life situations, it is not clear whether the teaching and learning of Civic Education in secondary school incorporate active learning. In this regard, teachers and teacher-educators should consider the integration of Fadel's four-dimensional education in the teaching and learning process. Young people should not only be academic masters, but should have an educational experience that develops their social and emotional learning competencies like self-awareness and relationship skills which are the foundation of later workplace skills (Banda and Mpolomoka, 2018).

## 5. Conclusion

This study has described Charles Fadel's four-dimensional education of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning. Key domains that have been discussed are; knowledge, skills, character, and meta-learning. The study has examined how Fadel's four-dimensional education can be used in teaching and learning of Civic Education in secondary schools in 21<sup>st</sup> century Zambia. Knowledge acquired in class or other experiences will lead to the realization and actualization of individual skills. These skills need to be implemented with one's self-awareness



of the implications of today's and tomorrow's generation. All this calls for knowledge, skill, character education, and meta-learning.

## 6. Recommendations

Considering the relevance of Fadel's four-dimensional education in the 21st century teaching and learning of Civic Education, the study recommends the following:

1. The Government and Stakeholders should review Civic Education curriculum course in colleges and universities in Zambia to incorporate 21st teaching and learning methods as espoused in the four-dimensional education model.
2. Government, Stakeholders and institution of higher learning should fund research to interrogate methods used in teaching and learning Civic Education so as to help prepare learners for civic agency, give them confidence to vote, and engage them with communities voluntarily as these are tenets for the Millennial.

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