

Setting the Stage: Criteria for Integrating Indigenous Knowledge into the Zambian School Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Despite increased global recognition of the value of IK in education, many national curricular in Africa, Zambia inclusive continue to privilege western epistemologies; often marginalizing local knowledge and culturally grounded teaching practices. The importance and status of IK have changed in the wake of global knowledge yet, little has been done especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and mainly in Zambia, to guarantee the maximum exploitation of IKS for the common good of all persons. It was the aim of the study to analyse the criteria for integration of IK in the school curriculum in Zambia. To realise the aim of the study, qualitative research methodology was employed through semi-structured interviews with selected key education stakeholders such as curriculum specialists, traditional leaders, religious leaders and teachers from selected areas across the country. The collected data was thematically analysed, and data was discussed in accordance with the derived themes. The key education stakeholders who participated in this study made mention that the criteria for IK integration in the school curriculum can only be a success if handled from four major perspectives which included political influence, development appropriateness, knowledge relevance and knowledge demarginalization. The study also established significant potential for enriching the curriculum through community-based knowledge, traditional ecological practices, storytelling and indigenous languages particularly at early childhood, primary and secondary levels. The study concluded that for Zambia's education system to become truly inclusive and contextually relevant, a deliberate and structured effort is required to mainstream IK across subjects and levels. The study thus recommends a curricular reform to a local context for curriculum reform, teacher education and community engagement and policy implementation to support transformation.

Keywords: Indigenous knowledge, integration, school curriculum

1.0 Introduction

Education is expected to initiate everyone into the general culture of his/her community and ensure that the transmission of the culture is sustained (Wane, 2008). This understanding presupposes that there is a definite connection between culture, the aims of education and the content. The content of education is the school curriculum, and its choice are primarily determined by the aims of education set by the society concerned which in turn determines the structure of the educational system and its sustainability. These are expected to be unique as societies are unique in their composition, past experiences, daily challenges, world view and future (Ndille & Phil, 2018). School curricular in Africa, Zambia inclusive, which are mostly dominated by western values, knowledge, and pedagogies at the expense of indigenous knowledge and epistemologies, remain a major area of concern in education systems.

Research and recounted experiences have ubiquitously revealed that colonialism brought about rapture in every aspect of life in Africa from the traditional political institutions and indigenous economic developments to social-cultural norms and values for its own sake (Ndile, 2014; Aissat & Djafri, 2011; Ndlovu, 2013). It is in this view that Higgs (2016), argued that curriculum in post-colonial Africa is still largely confronted by the legacy of colonial education that remained in place decades after political decolonisation. The challenges facing African countries such as Zambia, therefore, is the capacity to define their own paradigm of development if they are to expand their own locus of authority out of the web of dependency on developed nations created by many years of colonial and foreign influence on education and development policies (Mwenda, 2003). The school is insulated from the community, from work, from production, from the thoughts and aspirations of the masses from whose taxes we maintain this educational institution in splendid isolation (Bishop, 1985). This leads to learners “educational disengagement” (Fataar, 2012: 55) and alienation as well as perception that school education is irrelevant, sustaining the internalised colonial inferiority complex that regards everything non-western as worthless. It is this complex “epistemological shock” (Bredlid, 2013: 55) in the classroom that may create learning problems. If a country is to achieve rapid economic growth however, its education should be related to productivity. Some of the solutions to problems currently encountered in African societies and communities must proceed from understanding the dynamics with the local context. Such dynamics may include the role of indigenous knowledge and practices in the development processes (Angioni, 2003; Dei, 2002; UNESCO, 2006). This implies that there is urgent need for contextualizing the school curriculum through integrating indigenous knowledge with other relevant and useful knowledges in addition to what is already in the formal education.

Scholars such as Fataar, (2012); Mawere, (2015); Seehawer, (2018a), have emphasised that integrating learners’ own indigenous knowledges into education eases learners’ learning

difficulties by building a bridge to access western classroom knowledge and as an end, contributing to a contextualised, culturally responsive education that is relevant for learners' daily realities. Webb (2016) advised that one should be clear as to what knowledge a majority group consider to be their indigenous knowledge and explore their views on the appropriateness for inclusion of such knowledge in the school curriculum. With the integration of indigenous knowledge that is more appropriate to the needs of the indigenous community, it is hoped that local problems can be addressed effectively (Owuor, 2007). The study thus aimed to focus on the criteria for integrating indigenous knowledge in the Zambian school curriculum from the perspective of some of the key education stakeholders.

1.2 Research Question

What are the principles key education stakeholders believe should be used to appropriately introduce indigenous knowledge in the school curriculum?

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The social constructivist theory was chosen for this study on account of its appropriateness and its strength in respect of accommodating other knowledge systems, such as IK. This theory enables learners to use their IK, which can play a crucial role in promoting the acquisition of various knowledge systems. De Beer and Mothwa (2013) maintained that the IK existing in our communities can be used to facilitate learning. The social constructivist theory can provide a platform for learners to actively interact with each other to develop various innovations as IK stems from indigenous communities that are characterised by group activities. From the above explanations therefore, the constructivism mode of learning was chosen to be the most appropriate paradigm for integrating IK in the Zambia education curriculum. This was based on the premise that constructivism is a model for learning and teaching where learners learn by fixing ideas that are new with that which is known already. What is already known should emanate from the environment immediately to them with the help of IK. In establishing the criteria for integrating IK in the Zambian school curriculum, the constructivism lens was used as the theoretical framework,

2.0 Literature Review

Decolonisation has gained currency in scholarship of which McGregor and Park (2019:333) defined as the process that “involves confronting of academic mentality that ignores indigenous theorists and scientists and aims at placing indigenous information, resources and research culture on an equal footing with those imposed during the colonial era.” The epicentre of decolonisation of the curriculum is the idea of returning to the traditions and customs of the olden days, which were defined by respect for people, their culture and knowledge systems when

constructing the curriculum. By decolonising the curriculum, we are allowing those who were historically marginalised to communicate from their frames of reference (Le Grange, 2016, Kgari-Masondo & Chimbunde, 2021). To this effect, a lot of studies have been conducted which have called for the decolonisation of the curriculum mostly by way of integrating indigenous knowledge. It is thus the aim of this section to review some studies related to this study as a way of bringing this study into context as well as establishing the gap that this study seeks to fill.

Even though western education is indispensable and became a game changer, its adoption in the mainstream education system/curriculum has substantially strained the passing of relevant skills, values and knowledge to most African communities and this has been because adoption of western education was not tailored to the context, realities and needs of most indigenous communities. Unlike IK which was prepared for the young ones to face their immediate future realities and contribute to the development of the community, western education seems far from equipping Africans to understand themselves and their surroundings. Kugara and Mdhuli (2023) in their study advocated for the adoption of indigenous education to bring positive impact to African societies and called for collaborative efforts for the revival, adaption and continuation of IK without looking at it as inferior. Mamphis, Wana and Noyoo, (2000) equally noted that the western based education did not capture much of the African values and needs. It prepared people mostly to be ready for employment and to serve other people making them to hardly convert the knowledge into something tangible within the community. Formal education system is fundamental but to some extent diametrically opposed to the needs of Africans. IK and skills that empowered its products to sustain were excluded in the formal education. The harnessing of IK is thus indispensable and makes more sense than throwing it away in the dustbin in preference for education that is foreign and does not address or resonate with day-to-day realities of sustainable livelihood.

Several studies that have been conducted help us understand and support the argument in favour of the incorporation of IK in teaching. However, those studies do not include practical guidelines on exactly how IK should be integrated in the school curriculum. The study undertaken by Pawilen (2013) explored the kind of IK that can be integrated in the school curriculum and, drawing from constructivism, the author advocates the idea that learners' experiences must be the starting point for learning. However, no practical examples are offered of IK that ought to be included in the teaching of various subjects. Mawere (2015) also argued for the incorporation of IK in schools to enhance learning but fails to advise on teaching strategies that can promote the integration of IK in classrooms. De Beer and Mothwa (2013) acknowledged that the rich IK and cultural practices can assist learning and state that a good teacher makes use of the existing knowledge of learners when teaching new knowledge and skills. However, they too fail to suggest teaching strategies that would be suitable for integrating IK as prior knowledge to

enhance learning. Meyiwa, Letsekha and Wiebesiek (2013) conducted a study to explore ways in which IK can be used to promote learning and employed participatory action research to gain an understanding of how IK could assist learning. However, no attempt is made to show how local indigenous people can be engaged in incorporating IK in classrooms. This study aims to fill the gap by focussing on the actual criteria that can be used for the integration of IK in various school subjects and how best a curriculum can be developed in a local context.

3.0 Methodology

As this qualitative study was about an analysis of criteria for integration of IK in the Zambian school curriculum, whose main contention is subjective and not situated in any single reality or truth, the notion of a social constructivist worldview is pertinent (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Berger & Luekmann, 1967). Constructivism is framed by the belief that there is not one objective reality to which everyone makes sense of the world based on his or her experiences (Von Glasersfeld, 2008). Reality can therefore only be socially and personally constructed by the subject being actively involved in its construction (Fouche & Schurink, 2014). As noted by Creswell (2009), individuals develop subjective, varied, and multiple meanings of their experiences-meanings directed towards certain objects or things. The assumption underpinning this study was that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work, and the goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participant's view of the situation being studied. To open the conversation between the participants enough to forge meaningful discussions and/or interactions with others the questions which were used were broad, general, and open-ended. In this way the study aimed at enabling the participants to construct and negotiate meaning together socially and historically (Creswell, 2009). The study was mainly carried out in Lusaka district. Purposive sampling was used to select Lusaka district as a site for study because of the high number of most of the key stakeholders in the education sector. Seven other sites where the traditional leaders or representatives of the officially recognised ethnic groups were accessed. In qualitative research, sampling proceeds according to the relevance of cases instead of their representativeness (Flick, 2009). The study sample, therefore, was estimated at twenty-two (22) respondents. A breakdown that comprises ten (10) teachers from sampled schools, two (2) curriculum specialists, three (3) representatives of religious mother bodies, and seven (7) representatives of traditional leaders.

3.1 Study Findings

When asked about the criteria that could be used to introduce indigenous knowledge into the school curriculum, most of the respondents had varied views. Three main broad themes that emerged from the data were knowledge demarginalization, political influence, knowledge relevance and developmental appropriateness.

3.1.1 Knowledge Demarginalization

Most respondents shared the views of respondent T10 who proposed the principle of knowledge demarginalization. This respondent explained saying that *“the point of departure in integration of IK is finding the point of intersection of diverse world views and knowledge systems”*, a process she described as resulting in a contextualised curriculum and balancing the world views in curriculum to reflect the needs of the society. She noted that pedagogies such as storytelling, project-based learning, and community-based learning should guide the integration process. As echoed by one of the teachers *“Storytelling and observation are keyways of teaching indigenous knowledge as they align with traditional learning methods” (T03)*. Most responses suggested that field trips to indigenous sites and practical assignments based on indigenous agricultural or ecological practices may create immersive learning opportunities.

Most respondents explained that the indigenous worldview emphasizes interconnectedness, harmony with nature, and the holistic integration of knowledge, values, and practices. Unlike Western perspectives that often separate disciplines, the indigenous worldview sees knowledge as integrated and interdependent. As one respondent explained, *“Indigenous knowledge underscores interconnectedness and experiential learning, helping learners understand the relationship between subjects and real-life applications” (T09)*.

Most respondents considered integration of IK in the school curriculum as a process of knowledge demarginalization. They, however, pointed out that IK should not be isolated as a parallel form of knowledge rather it should be strategically positioned to improve the quality of teaching and learning of another knowledge. Respondent RL01 said *“IK items should not be integrated as separate knowledge but integrated with the other knowledge to enhance teaching and learning.”* Most of the respondents agreed that for successful integration of IK, the content selection process should be inclusive. Respondent RL04 said *that what IK should be integrated into the curriculum is preferably what will benefit all the other communities as well and it should be IK that has a positive impact on the lives of human beings*. Respondent TL 02 believed that indigenous languages for a long time have been marginalized in school curriculum and thought that it was fundamental to integrate IK in the school curriculum. He said:

To me I see the issue of vernacular language being a critical issue and something needs to be done. Even counties can set up a vernacular school as vocational studies for children so that children can understand their mother tongue language first... Resourceful people should be involved from the communities...to find out from the stakeholders what valuable IK needs to be integrated...These IK should come from or cut across all the cultures\.

Integrating this worldview into the curriculum allows learners to appreciate the balance between the physical, spiritual, and ecological dimensions of life. For example, lessons on environmental conservation can incorporate indigenous beliefs about living in harmony with the land, fostering a sense of stewardship among learners. Most respondents agreed with respondent T03 who explained that *consideration of diverse forms of knowledge and multiculturalism as experienced by the citizenry should also be the basis for integration of IK in the school curriculum*. Almost all respondents shared the view that everyone has a responsibility in curriculum integration process and to sensitize for more inclusion of IK, respondent T10 proposed *“that projects that incorporate IK can be done by us and parents can comment on curriculum content”*. Other concerns that were raised by the respondents in their views to be paramount in the integration of IK in the school curriculum were as respondent RL01 stated the *emphasis for the integration of IK in the school curriculum should be based on authenticity/genuineness, respectfulness/tolerance, critical/healthy, debatable and bordering on social justice.*”

Respondents further echoed that teachers need professional development programs focusing on indigenous knowledge systems, instructional methodologies, and cultural sensitivity. Engaging community elders or indigenous experts to co-teach specific topics could further enrich the teaching process. As was noted from one respondent who suggested that *“Provide teachers with specialized training and resources to enable them to teach indigenous knowledge effectively”* (T06).

3.1.2 Knowledge Relevance

Interestingly, respondent RL 04 showed concern on what and how IK can be identified for inclusion in the school curriculum, and she explained that *“there should be clear guidelines as to which indigenous knowledge to include and how it should be included into the curriculum.”* In line with this thought, it was noted from most responses that there is already IK that has been integrated into the school curriculum, however, most of the important aspects of IK were still missing. Respondent T08 said, *“there has been a lot of IK that has not found its way into the curriculum although it is important and practical knowledge to the learners and society at large”*. She explained that this may be because *“the current curriculum and subject syllabi are mostly examination oriented and thus teaches a lot of theory at the expense of IK which is supposed to be practical in nature”*. Most respondents were of the view that rote learning, as noted by respondent T04, makes *“learners graduate from school half-baked and these are learners who cannot survive well in society where there is little or no resources.”* It was common from most of the responses that the relevance of each IK items should be considered before it is infused into the school curriculum. Respondent RL01 said *“in the face of multiculturalism and internationalization of knowledge, the relevance of IK to the majority should be considered before its integration into the school curriculum so that learners are exposed only to valuable*

knowledge that will be useful in their day-to-day life". Respondent T08 agreed respondent RL01 adding that:

"What is global now begun from local and as knowledge integration is done, it spreads to other people and becomes international and so local indigenous knowledge that is of value should be appreciated and integrated in the curriculum to benefit others. Tourism is local but it is international in that people travel from far to come and see local sites or cultures."

3.1.3 Developmental Appropriateness

The education stakeholders who participated in the study noted that, to make indigenous knowledge meaningful, it must be taught in context, reflecting the traditions, practices, and environment of local communities. Indigenous instructional materials, such as folklore, traditional farming methods, and herbal medicine practices, should align with the specific needs and realities of the learners' surroundings. A respondent emphasized, *"Students should visit indigenous sites to learn practices firsthand"* (T02), exemplifying the importance of experiential learning. Most respondents stated that contextualizing IK also involved incorporating teaching methods like storytelling, observation, and hands-on activities, ensuring learners see the relevance of this knowledge in addressing real-world problems such as food security, health, and environmental sustainability.

Most respondents proposed the criteria of building knowledge and knowledge delivery from known to unknown basing on the learner developmental stages, respondent CS02 highlighted that *"a focus on the approach, level/grade of learner and relevance should be considered in curriculum delivery. Knowledge should be built from known to unknown and that each IK item can be introduced basing on the level of difficulty of the concept."* Respondent T07 explained that *"all indigenous knowledge should be integrated in the subjects that will be compulsory and disseminated at all levels of learning by ensuring that it is developmentally appropriate for the learners to easily grasp the concepts."*

Most respondents stated that IK, and western knowledge can be realigned before it is integrated. For example, respondent T10 said, *"I strongly feel that I.K and western knowledge need realignment and merging after looking at I.K from all perspectives."* She explained saying

"some knowledge is already implemented but a great aspect of IK needed proper alignment with the western knowledge for smooth blending of the two knowledge systems as well as effective implementation of the school curriculum."

Respondent T06 added saying “*it is essentially important and worthy knowing IK including the indigenous peoples’ way of life stories because it promotes social heritage and expose how different political injustices were handled.*” Respondent T03 however, was quick to caution when she said that “*the shift to technology has ignored the indigenous way of learning hence need to be corrected through appropriate integration of IK into the school curriculum.*”

Recognizing these local variations is critical for effectively integration of IK into the school curriculum. One respondent noted that “*This is knowledge of our local community in terms of its ways of life, and mostly it’s informally acquired through elders and interactions,*” (L04). For example, indigenous agricultural practices in one region might focus on water management, while another region might prioritize soil fertility or pest control. Curriculum developers must adapt content to reflect the local context, ensuring that the knowledge taught is immediately applicable and resonates with learners lived experiences. Engaging local elders and community members in the curriculum design process ensures that regional diversity is respected and preserved.

4.0 Discussion of Findings

The key education stakeholders who participated in this study made mention that the criteria for IK integration in the school curriculum can only be a success if handled from three major perspectives which included political influence, development appropriateness and knowledge demarginalization. They explained that much as IK is very vital in both the lives of the learners and social transformation, not all IK can be integrated into the school curriculum hence the need for careful selection of the much-needed IK using the mentioned criteria.

Political influence

On the principles or criteria that could be used to guide the integration of IK into the school curriculum, most respondents explained that politics has the greatest influence on what content goes into school curriculum in Zambia. They argued that education is a political activity and so whatever that goes into the education system cannot be completely detached from politics. Participants affirmed Shizhas’ (2013) notion that the political elites, who decide on what constitute valid school knowledge, often takes for granted the collective knowledge on indigenous perspectives of African indigenous people saying, “integration is a matter of political realm, anything that needs to happen can happen here...there is no barrier as long as it is a political will”. This finding agreed with Mauleys’ (2001) observation from the policy documents that since independence, education reform has been political rather than professional in developing countries, Zambia included. However, in the study participants’ perspective, using political influence to authenticate knowledge content is not the best way to transform and

decolonise the African curriculum. Two participants had a view that the best principle is to give learners an opportunity to democratically contribute to what should be learnt in the school curriculum.

One of the respondent's views that problem-based learning where learners are free to discuss and present their ideas was seen to be a fundamental guideline for successful integration of IK in an African context curriculum by most of the respondents. This finding was consistent with the view of Shizha (2013) who posited that inclusive perspectives in knowledge production and mediation should be the aim of curriculum transformation.

Most respondents expressed a concern that the teaching resources provided by the current curriculum to teachers are not relevant to integration of African languages in the school curriculum claiming that there are very limited teaching and learning resources that are written in the local languages. Almost all the curriculum implementation supporting documents are written in English. For that reason, some study participants proposed the need to have curriculum implementation supporting documents to be Africanised, suggesting that one of the reasons for poor implementation of an IK integrated curriculum could be inappropriate and irrelevant teaching materials. This view is consistent with Van Niekerk (2004) who claimed that there is no commitment to embed IKS at curriculum implementation level.

Knowledge relevance

For education to be liberating it should focus on relevant contexts and local African knowledge(s) that can help African society to withstand the challenges of a rapidly changing global economy (Msila, 2016). This position was affirmed by some participants' expression that although society is fast changing, the role that IK systems play in moulding children cannot be ignored, nor the fact that knowledge is socially constructed even before young children join school. This is in line with the constructivism theory which is the guiding lens of the study whose major point of contention is that learners construct knowledge out of their prior experiences and develop their thinking abilities by interacting with other children, adults and physical world. This is like Okoths' (2016) and Odora Hoppers (2001) position where they emphasised that learners do not come into formal education contexts as empty vessels. Instead, learners already have some knowledge acquired from home through observation of traditional practices and beliefs, stories, riddles and proverbs, games and play and daily interactions with adults and the environment. However, most of the study respondents thought that the relevance of each IK item should be considered before it is infused into the school curriculum.

Learners should be equipped to transfer their IK to new situations. Ertmer and Newby (2013) explained that transfer refers to the application of existing knowledge to other settings. The

acquisition of certain skills or information facilitates learners' understanding of more complex and advanced skills in related fields (Mwamwenda, 2004). Thus, knowledge of different cultural structures may facilitate learning in different subject areas. For example, knowing how to make struts for indigenous chairs can enhance a person's knowledge of reinforcing technological products. Learners' IK acquired at home may assist them in acquiring technological knowledge and applying it in formal learning. According to Mwamwenda (2004:269), the greater the similarity between what has been learned and the transfer situation, the greater the transfer is. This is endorsed by Kalpana (2014), who stated that knowledge from one place is not necessarily relevant in another. Western knowledge is not always applicable to all situations.

This finding was in agreement with Webb (2016) who suggested that in order to answer the questions of what and why each IK should be included in the curriculum, one needs to establish its importance, legitimate academic discipline, and how the knowledge can be used to strengthen the understanding of the subject into which it is integrated to allow for more effective learning. Study respondents noted that in the face of multiculturalism and internationalization of knowledge, the relevance of IK to the majority should be considered before its "integration into the curriculum". All the participants seemed to agree and showed concern that there has been a great deal of IK that has not found its way into the curriculum although it is important and practical knowledge for society. They pointed out that the current curriculum and subject syllabus are mostly examination oriented and thus teaching theoretical knowledge and ignoring the initial indigenous knowledge the learner brings to school. This inference is supported by Lunenburg (1998) who stated that the dominant teacher-centred teaching methods used in the present formal education systems negates the constructivist theory which believes that children actively construct their own knowledge, rather than simply absorb and memorize ideas spoken to them by teachers.

Developmental appropriateness

Most study participants highlighted the principle of building knowledge and knowledge delivery from the known to the unknown basing on the learner developmental stages. The participants pointed that learner friendly curriculum content and pedagogy are crucial elements in the process of developing an all-inclusive curriculum based on efforts to reconnect the process of education, enculturation and human development to the well-being of community life (Knapp, 2014). These participants noted that African indigenous knowledge comprises skills and knowledge which were learnt using participatory pedagogies in stages based on age, gender, and even area of specialisation. Citing the integration of simple oral stories at childhood education as an example and complex indigenous technologies of cultivation and mineral extraction at higher levels, the participants proposed a careful selection of viable IK content to be integrated at every stage and age of learning as well as appropriate learner friendly pedagogies to be used to implement them.

The participants also believed that indigenous education approaches can augment learning processes in formal education contexts, contribute to the transformation of African educational curriculum, and make them more relevant to their context (Potokri, 2016).

Some study respondents confirmed a focus on the approach, level/grade of learner and relevance should be considered in curriculum delivery. Knowledge should be built from known to unknown with most of the respondents proposing the introduction of IK items in grades based on the level of difficulty of the concept and relationship of the IK concept with the subject of inclusion. However, Mudaly & Ismail (2013) pointed out that an important pedagogical implication is that teachers need to have a conceptual knowledge of indigenous knowledge which is suitable to the area in which they operate if they are to teach it effectively. One participant, exceptionally opined that all indigenous knowledge should be integrated in the subjects that will be compulsory and disseminated at all levels of learning by ensuring that it is developmentally appropriate.

All participants agreed that some of the IK items have already been integrated and what needs to be done is realignment of that knowledge and appropriation in the current curriculum to suit the needs of current society. Most participants realized that all the stakeholders equally have the responsibility in ensuring that IK is integrated in appropriate grades and subjects in school curriculum and effectively implemented if education is to yield African sustainable development. However, they proposed that Ministry of Education (MoE) through the Directorate of Curriculum Development (DCD) should consider incorporating IK during curriculum development process to provide a blended knowledge that reconciles the IK of the learners with modern knowledge that enables effective learning (Hewson, 2015). This was also based on the premise that relevant education is believed to enable people to solve effectively local and global problems that can address personal, experiential as well as world needs.

Knowledge demarginalization

The conversations that took place around the principles that could guide integration of Indigenous Knowledge into the school curriculum created a new word; 'demarginalization'. Demarginalization is not an English term; however, it was used by the participants to represent the act of reconsideration of knowledge that had initially been marginalised and the all-inclusive processes that consider the relationship between community projects and learning objectives. For Msila (2009) representation of IKS in formal education contexts provides an opportunity for an inclusive approach to education. In harmony with Msilas' view, most of the participants expressed their view that IK should be integrated with other knowledge rather than isolated as a parallel form of knowledge. The above inference is also purported in Sefa Deis' (2000) literature argument that integration of IK into academies is to recognise that different knowledge can co-

exist, different knowledge can complement one another, and that knowledge can complement and conflict at the same time.

When the participants outlined the exclusion of the role of community knowledge in the current westernised modern education system, they pointed out that it lacks contextual relevance (Shava, 2016). They highlighted that African indigenous knowledge, including culture and local languages, have been marginalised in the school curriculum for a very long time, and that today there is a need for its appropriation and integration to solve local problems. This has led to various calls for Africanisation that involves the adaptation of the subject matter, and the teaching methods geared to the physical and cultural realities of the African environment (Letsekha, 2013).

Most of the respondents pointed out that the selection of IK content for integration should be an all-inclusive process that considers the relationship between community projects and learning objectives. This approach resonates with the call for adoption of Place Based Education (PBE) in schools (Gruenewald, 2003). The rationale for Place Based Education is premised on creating opportunities for young people to learn about and care for the ecological and social wellbeing of the communities they inhabit, and the need to connect schools with communities as part of a concerted effort to improve student engagement and participation (McInerney & Down, 2011; Bowers, 2005; Gruenewald, 2003). To retain what they have learned, learners need to recognise the value of the subject matter in their own lives. The applicability of skills in their communities will motivate learners to cherish and retain those skills. In addition, Kalpana (2014) explained that constructivist theorists recommend that teachers design learning tasks that promote divergent thinking. Learners will be discouraged if they are expected to acquire skills that are not related to IK. There is great need therefore for teachers to use authentic contexts rooted in real situations outside the classroom to enhance learner's understanding. Ankiewicz and De Swardt (2001) rightly observed that through learning by doing, learners become increasingly involved in authentic practices. Thus, learning is taken beyond the classroom to expert practitioners in the field. This confirms Omolewa's (2007) argument that the incorporation of some elements of IK into "modern day educational practice" can enhance the quality of the latter.

All the participants outlined curriculum infusion of IK to foster socially oriented learning, develop the mind and the intellect for rigorous community activities as advocated by Emeagwali (2003) and preferably what will benefit across all the other communities as well and it should be IK that has a positive impact on the lives of human beings. Participants also opined that IK content should be strategically positioned to improve the quality of teaching and learning of the other knowledge. This opinion concurs with Gumbo's (2016) who proposed the idea that infusion of indigenous technologies in the curriculum has the potential to make teaching and learning relevant for learners, especially indigenous learners. In addition, participants shared a

perception that indigenous languages and culture have been marginalized for a long time in school curricula, and they thought that it is a fundamental barrier to the process of integration of IK in school curricula. Education of whatever form becomes successful when it is user friendly and underpinned by the peoples' culture (Sesanti, 2016). All respondents strongly called for diverse forms of knowledge and multiculturalism as experienced by the citizenry, which they claimed to be representation and consideration of the African multiple cultures as a basis for integration of IK in the school curriculum.

5.0 Conclusion

Most of the study participants proposed that only relevant and common IK items cutting across communities be integrated in the school curriculum. They also advocated that the Directorate of Curriculum Development should plan for an all-inclusive curriculum development process by integrating IK at the curriculum development stage and clearly outline possible and realistic ways of implementing IK integrated curriculum at the school level. This should incorporate active community and indigenous peoples' involvement from curriculum development to implementation stage. Demarginalization was a strong issue in terms of being a criterion for integrating IK in the school curriculum, which can be likened to the politics of recognition noted by Hodson (2009) and social justice for the marginalized (Dei, 2000). The respondents noted that curriculum transformation and implementation entirely depend on education policies which are mainly influenced by political orientations and thus they suggested that political influence should be used to get IK content integrated appropriately and implemented in the Zambian school curriculum.

The relevance of the knowledge to be integrated in the curriculum was also highlighted as a major principle. The participants proposed that content selection of IK that adds value to the life of the learners and its evaluation should be done prior to integration and implementation follow-up and research should be carried out. Participants also proposed that selection and grading of IK content to be integrated in the school curriculum should consider the learners' developmental stages and grades. They pointed that the level of difficulty of the knowledge concept should be put into account while placing knowledge into curriculum to comprehend learning. Finally, an inclusive education approach was proposed in which both modern knowledge and IK are intertwined in the curriculum to serve the current needs of society in general and those of indigenous cultures in their natural contexts.

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