
Basic Voter Education: a Panacea to low voter turnout in Tanzania? A Case of Selected Secondary Schools in Kinondoni Municipality

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines Basic Voter Education in relation to voter turnout in Tanzania due to persistent low voter turnout in Tanzanian General Elections. A total of 96 Students from exit Ordinary and Advanced level classes from 15 selected public and private secondary schools in Kinondoni Municipality were involved in 12 Focus Group Discussions while 8 purposeful selected teachers from Civics and General Studies were consulted through in-depth interviews. The findings revealed that basic voters' education provided through civic education is a key to the success of any democracy especially on facilitating voters' turnout. However, this is poorly provided in Tanzania and the government bears the blame for failing to oversee its provision in content formation, class time allocation, final examinations, grading, teachers' incompetency and textbooks censorship. In addition, parents' failure to encourage their children to focus on the subjects and students' negligence of the subjects are also causes for poor performance of the Civics and General Studies offered in Tanzania secondary schools. It is thus concluded that basic voters' education is essential and should not be seen as a substitute of traditional voters' education, but rather as its complement. Therefore, it is recommended that curriculum review and professional teaching should be mandatory.

Key words: Voters, Voters education, Basic Voters Education, Voters Turn Out

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Low voter turnout in political elections worldwide is a common trend. The United States of America (USA) for instance has the lowest voter turnout among the developed countries (Cizmar 2016) whereas in the 2016 voter turnout from the states ranged from 42 to 74 percent. According to Young (n.d), the persistence of low voter turnout in Africa is caused by newness of democracy at national

level, election irregularities at district level, individual attitude, political affiliation and literacy. The available statistics show that the trend of voters turnout in Tanzanian elections has been unpredictable whereby in the 1965 general elections voter turnout was 77.08 percent, in 1970 it was 72.25 percent in 1975 it was 81.71 percent, in 1980 it was 86 percent, and in 1985 was about 75 percent. In the first multiparty elections for example in 1995, the turnout was 76.67 percent, in 2000, it was 84.43 percent, in 2005, it was 72.41 percent, and in 2010 General elections, the turnout dropped to 42.83 percent (African Election Database 2010). In the 2015 elections, 23,254,485 voters were registered but only 15,193,862 turned out (Muhanga 2018) despite advancement in mass media through ICT (Information Communication Technology). According to The Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO), reasons include loss of voters' registration identity cards, inaccurate management of PNVR, purchase of voter registration cards by candidates and poor voters' education among others (TEMCO 2011). This research focuses on voters' education in finding out the causes for persistent low voter's turnout in the Tanzania political elections. This is because the government has made deliberate efforts in investing in voters' education raising questions as to the effectiveness of such efforts.

Voter Turn Out is the percentage of people who actually vote in an election from those who registered and it is among the key factors that legitimizes a political system. On the other hand, voters education (herein refers to as Traditional Voter Education) according to Ace project (2018), is the informally and occasionally provided education tied to the electoral cycle. This education is provided to support the electoral process, and designed to ensure that 'voters' are ready, willing and able to participate in electoral process. The education is solely provided by the electoral authority (NEC) or occasionally subcontracted to private companies and Civil Society Organizations. The education is a forum of describing the dissemination of information, materials, and programs designed to inform voters about the specifics and mechanics of the voting process for a particular election. The same is also provided via lectures, workshops/seminars, music, dance, drama, rallies, networking with stakeholders, media, face to face interactions, and printed materials such as brochures, posters fliers, banners, and commercial advertising among others.

Owing to the shortcoming of the traditional voters' education, that is its short term, informal nature and its 'improper conception and the institutions with the mandate of delivering it, the paper focuses on Basic Voters Education (BVE). According to the Ace Project (ibid), BVE is concerned with motivating voters and

preparing them to participate fully in the elections. It is a continuous, systematic, and formalized with carefully selected topics that show citizens' rights, democracy, human rights issues, why each vote counts, and other related concepts. In this paper, BVE is introduced as essential education provided to the citizens on their rights and responsibilities in participating in the governing of their country through conscious and informed participation in the elections generally and in voting in particular. This education is provided deliberately through formal institutionalized elementary education system and secondary education level by the state with designed programs and content according to age (Ace project 2018). Moreover, though not taken as an independent factor for rising turnout in Tanzania, this research posits that if complemented with the current voters education, turnout might rise.

Being informed by classical conditioning theory, this study pre-supposes learning as a relatively permanent change in the behaviour of an individual. As described by Ian Pavlov (1849-1936), learning is presented in Stimulus-Response paradigm and its major assumption is that reflexive responses will be elicited naturally without learning when there is a stimulus. Figure 1 summarizes the theory.

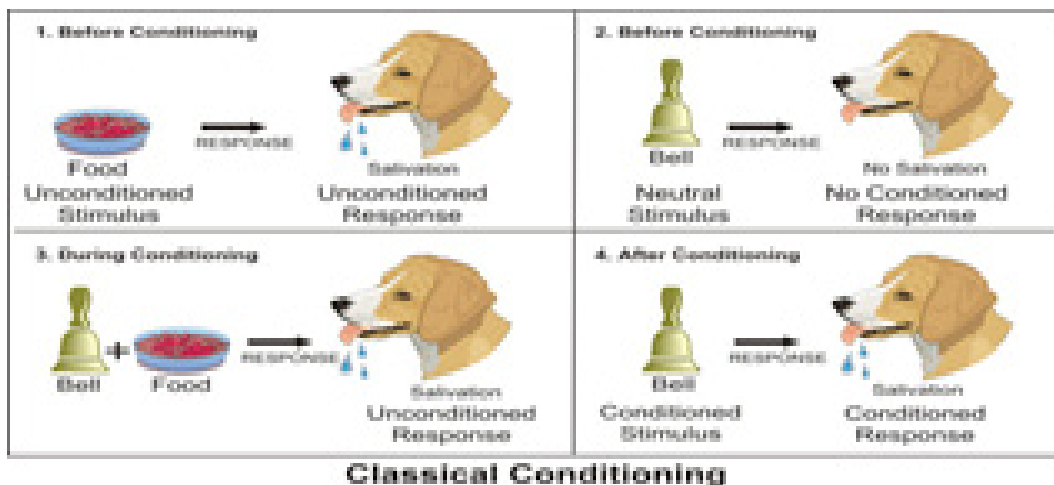


Figure 1: Classical Conditioning Theory

Source: www.study.com (n.d)

In the first scenario of his experiments Pavlov discovered that the dog salivated with presence of food hence, he concluded that the food (Stimulus (S)) elicits

Salivating (Response (R)). Here he showed that, conditioning is facilitated by an involuntary/reflex or inner behaviour caused by an environmental event and there is no learning because unconditional stimulus (UCS) automatically produces unconditional response (UCR). In relation to our topic, when citizens are provided with traditional voters education (unconditioned stimulus) they may or may not go to vote (unconditional response depending on the environment situation (UCS =UCR). In the second scenario when the bell is presented alone is not recognized by the dog and so it does not salivate (unconditional response) but when the sound of a bell is introduced accompanied by the food, the dog associates the two, learn, become oriented, and salivate. Here the Neutral stimulus (the bell) accompanied by the food (unconditional stimulus) produces unconditioned response (NS+UCS=UCR). In this paper, when BVE (represented by the Bell) is accompanied by traditional voters education (represented by food) will elicit citizens participation in the elections because they (citizens) have become oriented (NS+UCS=UCR).

In the third and fourth scenarios, after conditioning has taken place Basic voters' education will elicit citizens' participation in the elections, in other words, a desired response (NS=CR). However, it has to be noted that basic voters' education is a necessary but not sufficient factor for eliciting voter turnout. It has to be complemented by traditional voters' education for the voting exercise to take place effectively. Here, after the BVE has been acclimatized or institutionalized to students/voters/citizens the question of voting becomes a conditioned involuntary response. It is only through a formal education system where students/voters/citizens become conditioned. Now let's us examine a few empirical studies that have addressed the topic.

According to Article 21, of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 'everyone has the right to take part in elections' but, the Traditional voters education has failed to define a voter by confining to adults of voting legal age neglecting children. This is the source of low turnout among the many factors (Duer, 2016). When children are regarded as voters, their rights to voters' education will also be guaranteed; that is, it will be provided in formal education system where content and teaching methods can differ according to age and students' understanding level (Ace project, 2008). Also NEA (2018) and Print and Lange (2012) support the idea that informed voting begins in the classroom, whereby basic voters education is interdisciplinary and permeates all curricula from the elementary grade through higher levels before one enters the voting community.

Basic voters' education can be provided in three models (McAllister, 2011). The first, is where civic education gets integrated into the mainstream curriculum of the school system, which is mostly the case in the United States of America (USA). Secondly, civic education could be made to cut across subjects with no separate civic programs; a good example is Britain where particular emphasis is put on history. Lastly, by combining the above as is done in France. Of the three models, BVE mostly uses the USA model whereby voters' education is incorporated in mainstream curriculum in all levels of schools system.

There has been significant improvement in turnout in countries that have invested in formal education as a means of imparting civic knowledge, voters' education inclusive. In 2010 for instance, Florida enacted a law requiring middle school students to pass highly in civics exam (Delander, 2014) and voter turnout increased significantly especially among young voters. This has for instance resulted to higher turnout of voters aged between 18-24 from 17.6 percent in 2014 to 29.7 percent in 2018 with the credits being given to the efforts prioritising formal civic education, though other factors are also indispensable (Man 2019).

Furthermore, in Finland political efficacy attained through formal education system with the right pedagogy and prolonged engagement in open environment has significantly raised young voters' turnout than when voting is taken as a civic duty (Inkinen and Saari 2019). In addition, a study by Campbell (2008) covering 28 countries has established that formal education with proper teaching methodology can predict the intended voting among secondary school youths. However, though ideal, in practice it is not so. Research done by Duer (ibid) in the USA for instance, established that, civic education is 'the most underrated crisis in American Education System' despite the deliberate measures taken by some of the states in instilling it in the middle and high school levels. Thus, the USA is cited as among the countries with the lowest turnout and civic competency with few exceptions in some states such as Florida; the slump being caused by negligence in the formal civic education since 1960s (Man, 2019). Islam and Crego (2016) call this 'Citizen Deficit Disorder'.

A study by Adeyinyi et al. (2015) in Nigeria found civic education as unstable, disorganized, provided under duplicate curriculum, lacks adequate human resource, facilitates recitation and rote learning, geared towards acquisition of certificates only, and not focused on honest and patriotism. The study recommends for having the curriculum designed according to age and teachers' training (Jekayinfa et al. 2011)

In Tanzania, the history of civic and voter education is elaborated by the National Strategy for Civic Education (2011) whereby civic education has undergone several metrological and pedagogical changes, in terms of names and content as it evolved. During the colonial era, civic education was limited in scope and purpose. In a single party era, it was provided mainly by Nyerere who 'turned the country into a big civic class' through his speeches while in schools it was named Civics which was compulsory from Primary to University. In the *Ujamaa (Socialist)* era, it was named 'Siasa' (Political Education) which provided education on socialism focusing on equality and cooperation; and during the transitional period to multiparty system, civic education is said to have been left in the hands of uncoordinated non-state actors who focused on different contents. In this regard, it is said to have suffered from technical and pedagogical shortfalls (Lutatenekwa, 2007). Outside the school system, there were a myriad of avenues providing civic and voters' education such as adult education program, media, Kivukoni College, workers education, and cultural activities. After multiparty, nomenclatures the focus changed to such terms as '*Maarifa ya Jamii*' (Community Education) for Primary Schools level, Civics for Ordinary Secondary School level, General Studies for Advanced school level and Development Studies for Diploma and University levels. However, pedagogical challenges persisted.

Tanzania's National Electoral Commission (NEC) is mandated with the provision of voter education in the country since 2004 following the amendment of the election Act of 1985 (EISA 2010). Nonetheless, Tanzania continues to experience democratic deficiencies, ignorant citizens concerning their rights and responsibilities, and poor and uncoordinated provision of voter and civic education. Hence, the formulation of the National Strategy for Civic Education (NASCET) and the establishment of the National Commission for Civic Education in Tanzania (NACCET). NACCET's responsibilities include working with the government and other stakeholders to review the civic education curriculum, train civic education teachers, prepare curricula, mobilize resources for civic education and coordinate civic education provision in Tanzania (URT 2011).

The assessment of the development of this strategy however realizes that little emphasis is placed on schools as one of the medium through which civic education including voter's education could be provided. In the 2010 elections for instance, development partners under the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) established the Election Fund Support Project (ESP) which supported all elections activities through development partners to the tune of Tanzanian

shillings 7,415,633,070/=. With this support, *Chama Cha Demokrasia Na Maendeleo* (CHADEMA) for instance, conducted 900 election campaign meeting, mass media were also involved whereby more than 60 radio programs were aired, more than 150 local and national newspapers circulated different information on elections, and more than 50 TV programs on election news were aired while schools were disregarded. Paradoxically, high voter turnout was expected but the reverse was the case where the turnout dropped to 42.83 percent (TEMCO, 2011)

A study by Komba (2013) on Citizens Views on Appropriate Civic Education Curricular under Multiparty Democracy in Mainland Tanzania highlighted the need for civic education among the citizens. This includes the need of having civic education body in consultation with key stakeholders such as the Tanzania Institute of Education for providing syllabi for secondary schools. About 80 percent of the respondents agreed that the youth, which includes students in secondary school, need civic education most. The study also revealed a general approach of civic education with no specific attention to secondary schools (Mallya, 2006). Generally, all the above-mentioned studies suggest the indispensability of the need for civic education, basic voter education inclusive to be provided to the youth before they leave school. The efforts of engaging civic education in schools have been carried globally despite the fact that they have not been free from challenges.

The paper therefore examines the role formal education through Basic Voters Education (BVE) can play in facilitating voters' turnout. This is motivated by the view that, when the current voters education (the Traditional Voters Education) is complemented with the formal civic education (Basic Voters Education inclusive), voter turnout might rise. Therefore, the paper responds to the questions; what is the status of Basic Voter Education in secondary schools in Tanzania? What is the exit – level of students understanding of Basic voter Education? What are the challenges facing the provision of Basic Voter Education in Tanzania secondary schools? By responding to these questions in relation to other countries that have invested in basic voters' education and with significant results, Tanzania's position could then be explained.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the exploratory design using nominologist ontology so it was approached qualitatively. It was conducted at Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania. The region was among the Tanzania regions with the lowest voters'

turnout in the 2010 general elections. This was despite that voters education was largely provided in this region (Shumbusho, 2012). Study population included all 57 private schools and 25 public schools in Kinondoni municipality from which quota sampling was used to capture the diversity from both private and public schools. Purposeful sampling was then used to pick the actual schools to be studied using general performance in the 2018 National Examination results as the selection criteria whereby schools were categorized as high, average and low performers. The selected high performers included Canossa Girls and Shamsiye Boys, the average performing schools were Mbezi Beach and Makongo Secondary Schools while poor performers were Bunju A and Kinondoni Muslim Secondary Schools. These will be referred to as School A, B, C, D, E and F respectively. Two focus group discussions were conducted from each school, [1 Four from Form and 1 from Form Six students] making 12 focus group discussions with an average of 8 students each amounting to 96 students. For schools with only Ordinary level, the two groups were taken from Form Four. In addition, eight teachers in Civics and or General Studies were involved in the study. Primary data from these students and teachers involved the status, understanding, and challenges in the provision of basic voters' education. Secondary data on the status of basic voters' education in Tanzania and elsewhere were collected from Civic Education textbooks, Civic Education Syllabus, Governmental records, journal articles, and unpublished theses and dissertations. Data were analyzed mainly through thematic analysis and presented in the form of text with elaborations and quotations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Focus Group Discussions' demographic Characteristics

Sex of students was taken into consideration so as to remove bias. As it is seen, there was almost equal proportion between males and females with a few exceptions of same sex schools. In addition, sex is among the variables that must not be left out in social science studies because male and female brains differ anatomically, hormonally, and psychologically (Rabesandratana 2014) thus, a mix of their responses is crucial. Moreover, equal participation of men and women in learning and providing a shared opinion is a salient feature of modern democracy. Twelve FGDs were conducted with at least eight participants per group. In addition, eight teachers were involved. The results are presented in the following sections.

Status of Basic Voters' Education in Tanzania Secondary School Curriculum (Topics, Delivery)

The study aimed at examining the status of basic voters' education as delivered through civic education in secondary schools both at the Ordinary and Advanced levels. Civic knowledge is delivered through the Civics subject for Ordinary Level students and through General Studies subject for Advanced level students in Tanzania Secondary Education. Topics delivered according to levels as presented in the 2010 Tanzanian Civics Syllabus for Civics subject include: in Form One: the topics are Our Nation, Life Skills, Human Rights, Citizenship, Work, Family Life, Behaviour and Decision Making, and Road Safety. In Form Two, the topics include Life Skills, Government, Local Government, Central Government, Democracy, Democratic elections and Gender. In Form Three, the topics are Promotion of Life skills, Economic Development, Social Development and Poverty, and in Form Four, the topics are Culture and Globalization. For General studies subject in Form Five and Six the topics include Philosophy and Religion, Contemporary/Cross-cutting Issues, Science and Technology, Democratic Processes and Practices, Life Skills and International Affairs.

All these indicate the will of the government in imparting professional, formative, and learning-oriented civic education to its citizens as a prerequisite for ensuring students' democratic competence. However, the above topics lack progression from one level to the other. A study by URT (2011) proposed that content should include three attributes, i.e. *knowledge attributes*, *competencies attribute* and *attitude/values attributes*. These are slightly covered in Tanzania supposedly caused by the fact that a school system is not recommended as the main institution of providing civic education in Tanzania (Malya, 2016). However, with more than 70 percent of the content geared for the mentioned attributes in the Tanzania syllabus, it thus settles well with Classical Condition Theory in the third scenario where Neutral Stimulus (NS) is transformed into a Conditioned Stimulus (CS). In other words, after the BVE has been acclimatized to students/voters/citizens, the question of voting becomes a conditioned involuntary response as a reflex action. However, the mere presence of topics does not guarantee learning. Whether this will happen, depends on students' understanding.

Exit Level Students' Understanding on Basic voters' Education

This objective intended to know the extent to which civic education, which is provided at school, transforms students towards understanding their civic

responsibilities especially voting. Major questions posed in the FGDs were checking whether students will vote in the coming election, knowledge on their rights and responsibilities as citizens, knowledge on the concept of democracy and their opinion on the education that is provided.

Whether Students will Vote in Future Elections

As to whether they will vote when they are of the legal age, the responses differed across levels, that is, those in Ordinary Level and Advanced Level. About quarter of ordinary level students, confessed that they would not go to vote in the coming elections unlike the Advanced level where only a few students were of this opinion. When asked why, the reasons differed. For those who said 'Yes' (who were the majority) the reasons include 'it is my right, it is my responsibility, if I qualify, I want to see changes in the development, to get my needs, to get a patriotic leader, and to have better life future generations'. For those who said 'No' who were few mentioned things such as, 'not interested in politics, under age, hate election processes including long queue and weather. Others include lack of safety, politics is a lie, leaders turn into betrayers, apathy- that is even if I'll go to vote the ruling party (CCM) always wins, my vote won't count, present leaders are not ethical even though they give promises in the campaigns, I don't have enough education on the matter, no change and no safety.' Some were undecided for the reason that it will depend on the contestant of the day and the political parties manifesto.

These findings extrapolate an understanding of civic responsibilities of the participants. this can be attributed to the fact that school education creates critical thinkers who are able to assess situations (Print and Lange 2012). The possibility of these individuals changing their minds when they grow old is little or nonexistent because whatever stimulus they receive will be conditioned automatically with the inner knowledge gotten from school hence eliciting the required response. This 'democratic citizenship education' in turn will develop students' capability for thoughtful and responsible participation in political, economic, social and cultural life as democratic citizens (Print and Lange *ibid*). The majority of those who said they would not go to vote were from the ordinary level. Regardless that of a few these cited age as a reason, yet it implies that civic education in Ordinary Levels and especially basic voters' education is very low. Similar findings are reported by Inkinen and Saari (2019) who recommends for an open classroom environment that can predict 'higher levels of civic knowledge and the intended voting' as an intervention.

Knowledge on the Right to Participate in Community Affairs

This information was obtained by asking students to mention avenues in which they can participate as Tanzania citizens when they are out of the school environment. The majority were conversant in explaining the way they would participate in community works, local government meetings, and in sharing opinions in public gatherings and in elections of local leaders. Advanced school learners were more enthusiastic and confident in the manner they would exercise their rights. Some hesitated as they have once experienced or feared that their opinions would be rejected due to young age. Confidence and ability to question and critically express their opinions as active citizens is the aim of school system, there is need for making deliberate efforts in facilitating the same. Moreover, civic participation is considered as a prerequisite and a significant predictor for future participation (Reichert and Print, 2017).

Students Opinion on the Provision of Basic Voter Education

The aim of this question was to get a clear picture on the provision of civic education generally and on Basic voter Education in particular. Generally, the majority of FGD participants confessed of not liking the civic/general studies subjects. Similar findings were reported by Komba (2013), Waldschmitt (2010) and Mande (2016). Despite that, the disparity was per individual student, major differences existed across schools.

The most prominent factors mentioned across all the groups include, subjects (Civics/General Studies) are not career oriented. that is, they do not have any combination as is in other subjects such as Physics Chemistry and Biology (PCB) among others. no matter how high one scores he/she will only be ranked 'S' for Subsidiary in General studies subjects. This creates apathy and negative towards the subject and teachers among students. If this continues, civic literacy will wane and voter turnout might remain low, as it has been proved that there is a relationship between civic competency and voter turnout (Inkinen and Saari, 2019)

The presence of more than five different authored text books, some with ambiguous and contradictory facts for these subjects was another factor. The majority of the interviewed teachers argued that there is always disagreement among teachers themselves on some of the answers students give on the examinations because of different contents read by students from various textbooks. Paradoxically, some of the students from both Ordinary and Advanced levels confessed to have

never seen any Civics or GS textbooks. Moreover, all students from Ordinary and Advanced level complained of lack of transparency in the marking criteria; they complained that no matter how hard they study they would not pass as expected. This factor was also associated with teachers' incompetency; for instance, of the six schools visited only 5 percent had professional teachers' in Civics and GS, in other words, they themselves studied the courses and the teaching methodology. The same problem was observed in Morogoro region (Mande 2016), and in Nigeria by Adeyinyi et al. (2015) who found History teachers teaching civic subjects, something that promoted rote learning. This calls for the resurrection of teachers' subject panels in Tanzania which were once the best forum for teachers to train and share new developments; these are no longer existing due to lack of incentives.

Another contributing factor was time limit whereby Civic subjects are only allocated two periods per week unlike other subjects (by 98%), the content being too theoretical, and lack of content continuity from one level to the next. Little time allocation especially for Ordinary level was said to be making teachers resort to content based instead of competency based learning where they could have prolonged engagement and even have time to learn by practice. This method has been proven to be better in engaging learners' and consequently making students acquire a disposition of being politically engaged (Campbell 2008).

The seemingly easiness of the subjects was another factor, in that little effort is needed to understand the topics. One student from school B said, '*somo la GS hamna haja ya kusoma ukikutana na swali ambalo hujafundishwa unajiongeza tuu*' meaning that there is no need of studying the subject, since you can attempt any examination questions by intuition even if the topic has never been taught before. Had the environment been different, students would see the subject as beneficial. Unique situation was found in schools A and B where students were very positive about the subject due to the fact that the school in general and teachers have made deliberate efforts of emphasising on the subjects including starting a social science week, increasing the number of periods from two to four and adopting inclusive and competency based approach. Civics and General studies performance in these schools were even higher. This should be practiced by all schools, as it is one of the requirements of the competence-based learning, which the government claims to follow (Kafyulilo, Rugambuka, and Moses 2012).

Challenges in the Provision of Basic Voters' Education

This was addressed to Civics and General Studies teachers through in-depth interviews whereby all 8 teachers ascribed the low status of civics and General studies subjects to the Government, parents and students. The government and/or Tanzania Institute of Education curriculum developers were blamed for failing to design the content and effective modality of delivering civic education in schools. As a result, Civics and General Studies are ranked subsidiary (S) (for General Studies) and that Civics subject's role is only to penalize students. This has been a source of students negative attitudes towards teachers and the subjects. Furthermore, little time (two periods) is devoted Civics subject compared to other subjects such as Mathematics (six periods) an indication of lack of seriousness on the subject. Other challenges include fragmentation of topics, repetitions, time limit, lack of effective teaching and learning material and incompetency of some teachers. Others include ,failure of regulating materials on civic education resulting to a plethora of unfiltered materials in the market, disbanding of subject teachers' panels on General Studies and Civics and failure of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to establish itself in secondary schools. None of these challenges is unique in Tanzania. In Nigeria, the government is blamed for failing to develop a stable civic education program, which has resulted to 'immoral laxity' in the society (Adeyinyi et al 2015). Lessons can be learnt from Finland where deliberate efforts have been taken to invest in civic education in the education system and have resulted to high turnout of educated citizens (Inkinen and Saari 2019).

However, the current shift of emphasis to science and technical subjects from social subjects in Finland and rechanneling of resources might impair civic education delivery and eventually affect turnout (Inkinen and Saari, *ibid*). For basic voter education to be productive, teachers opined that it is better to have topics that are building progressively from the previous to the next, sensor books before authorization and ensuring that effective citizenship that has the ability of making knowledge-based decision is attained through education.

Generally, parents are responsible for students' performance whereby achievement increases when parents are involved (Campbel 2008). In this research, parents were found to play a negative role in supporting their children by not encouraging them to study Civics or General Studies and instead emphasizing on core subjects. It was reported for instance that during parents' visitations to schools whereby parents

were supposed to visit each subject teacher to get feedback on students' progress, rooms hosted by Civics/Gs subjects' teachers receive very few or no parents at all. In addition, percent of private school students had other subject text books but, very few had books for Civics and GS; and hardly did parents pay for extra Civics/ GS lessons (commonly known as tuition) during school vacations. All these reflect the fact that these subjects are considered as luring children to politics, which is considered dangerous, a lie and unbeneficial (Armstrong 2015). Lack of adequate civic education among parents might also be a cause. According to Cooper and Olsen (2003), parents play a significant role in supporting the teaching and learning process.

Students on the other hand, have to actively play their role otherwise attention would wane and learning would stop (Benassi et al., 2014). However, this is not the case for Civics and GS subjects' whereby majority of the interviewed teachers blamed students for apathy, which has become a barrier to their learning. Moreover, students are only serious during examination time. For example, students in School F confessed that it is only during the examination period that library shelves with Civics and General Studies books are found empty as books are borrowed. However, Duer (2016) argues that teachers need to device means that can actively engage them to make them interested in the subjects they teach. Nonetheless, students need also to react, respond outwardly, inwardly, emotionally, and intellectually, listen to ideas, ask questions, work cooperatively and complete assignments in time, and to the best of their abilities (Cooper and Olsen 2003) for learning to take place. Oxford Dictionary of Sciences quoted Thorndike who has explained the law of readiness which states that individuals learn best when they are ready to learn.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Voter education is among the factors that if well provided can lead to higher voter turnout in elections. The paper concludes that the current modality of providing BVE through Civics and GS subjects in secondary schools does not ensure higher voter turnout in general elections. It is also concluded that despite the significance of BVE, the Tanzania's school system does not prioritize its teaching and learning, teachers, and students face many challenges in the teaching and learning of the subject respectively. The challenges include shortage of class time, lack of competent teachers, poor quality of many civics/general studies textbooks, lack of a required

main text books, lack of proper weighting compared to other subjects and teacher-centred mode of delivery. It is further concluded that, the Tanzania government has failed to address problems facing civics and GS subjects as pointed out by students through lack of prioritization and in allocation of adequate resources. In addition, it is concluded that parents do not encourage their children to learn Civics and GS subjects hence, students lack of commitment to studying the subjects. Lastly, it is concluded that despite that basic voter's education (BVE) is a necessity it is nonetheless not sufficient when it comes to voters turn out during elections.

Recommendations

Based on the papers conclusions the following are recommended,

- 1 The government of Tanzania needs to make deliberate efforts in investing in awareness creation among her citizens and especially among students in schools on the importance of participation in general elections. This could be done through review of the existing Civics and GS curricula to include relevant topics that promote patriotism and behavioural change.
- 2 Teachers teaching Civics and GS need retraining through short courses to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge that are critical in making the delivery of the above-mentioned subjects more interesting to students.
- 3 Parents need to encourage their children to take Civics and GS subjects seriously just as they do for other subjects.
- 4 Tanzania's National Electoral Committee needs to invest strategically in the promotion of voters' education and their participation in general elections through proper engagement with secondary schools and the public. .

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