



INFLUENCE OF CIVIC EDUCATION ON SOCIAL INTERACTION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN EKITI STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of civic education on social interaction among secondary school students in Ekiti State. The study specifically examines if relationship existed between civic education and social interaction among secondary school students in Ekiti State. The study adopted descriptive research design of the survey type, The population of the study comprised all public secondary school students in Ekiti State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 320 students from the secondary schools in Ekiti State. The instrument for the study was a questionnaire tagged "Influence of Civic Education on Social Interaction Questionnaire" (ICESIQ) designed by the researcher. The study revealed that students were properly taught civic education in schools and that civic education influence the behavior of the students and hence influence the level of social interaction among the students. Based on the findings it was recommended that adequate textbooks should be provided by the government at various levels, school authorities should take attendance to the class of civic education more serious, trained teachers should be allowed to teach civic education, Civic education should be made compulsory for students in schools and parents should be made to attend interactive sessions in schools so as to relay the behavior of students at home.

Keywords: Influence, Civic Education, Social Interaction, Secondary School Students

Introduction

Education is a dynamic entity that requires dynamic approaches for actualization of its goal. It is a vital and indispensable factor to any form of development (Olarinoye, 2001; Offiah & Achufusi, 2010). Educated people who commit themselves to their community, to an open-minded society, to solidarity, and to social equity is what civilized society needs. Civic education refers to both formal and informal training given to the citizens to develop in them that knowledge, values and skills needed for effective participation in the political process and the civil society (Finkel, 2000; Azebamwan, 2010).

The increasing violence in the social, political and economic spheres of Nigeria has made life unbearable. Youth incivility has become the order

of the day, while civic virtues in all spheres of life have totally declined. The incessant cult activities in the country, kidnapping and the recent menace of boko haram, are the attested facts. Falade, (2008) summarized this in the following lines: Civic virtues and political qualities that make a good and responsible citizen are fast declining.

It is on the above premises that the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced civic education as a curricular subject in the educational system. Later it became an integral part of Social Studies. Though Social Studies curriculum was designed to promote national unity, and solve certain socio-political and economic problems, the society is still bedeviled by enormous social ills. The reason for not achieving the objectives of Social Studies could be



linked to certain administrative, infrastructural and pedagogical problems

However, the Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the National Council on Education (NCE) and Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2007) made conscientious efforts to establish Civic Education Curriculum for the Upper Basic Education Arm (JSS1-3) and recently for senior secondary (SSS1-3), the efficacy of its effective implementation is still in doubt. This is because; the issue is not necessarily on the new educational policy, but on the provision and management of facilities needed for its functionality

(Ezegbe, Oyeoku, Mezieobi and Okeke 2012)

The failure of civic education among learners at the school level has serious negative effect on the learner's attitudes (Adeniran, 2010). It is therefore not amazing, today, to see some of the Nigerian youths engaging in violence, non-tolerant attitudes and antisocial behaviour. This could be the reason why the Federal Government of Nigeria re-introduces civic education as a compulsory subject. According to SamEgwu, the former Minister of Education, it is part of President Umaru Yar'Adua's 7-point reform agenda to focus towards the growth of the human capital development. The introduction of the civic education is to refocus and reposition the country to further realize her full inert potentials as envisioned by our founding leaders. In the light of this, Nigerian school system could help to develop in the students' desirable social norms and national ethics.

Primary and secondary school levels are the basic foundation for other stages of the education system upon which students will be taught the basic norm and ethics and becomes responsible adults for their own

actions. Fan, Ekpo and Ita, (2008) revealed that Nigeria is facing many problems of which decline in education and cultural values is among with a very large proportions, Some of the problems include antisocial activities, undemocratic behaviour, huge examination mal-practice and misconduct among learners, that are not in our characters. The socio-political and economic problems emanate majorly from loss of civic values and unpatriotic practices demonstrated by some Nigerian citizens. Ajibade (2011) revealed that this system of education is concerned with the democratic skills and values that citizens need to function effectively in participatory democracy towards civilization. Civic education is capable of inducing those values, attitudes and skills that could enable the learner to live patriotic and democratic lives and contribute meaningfully to the progress of the nation (USAID, 2002; UNDP, 2004).

Finkel (2000) reported that Civic education aims at providing learners with useful information on their rights, responsibilities and requirements for political engagements with the purpose of enabling the citizens to make meaningful contribution to the political system. The introduction of civic education into the Nigeria system of education is to enhance the attainment of the objectives of education. However, teaching of civic education in schools could lay a strong and effective citizenship education and public participation in governance and other ethical issues that affect lives and culture of Nigerians. According to Adenipekun (2010), the reviewed Senior Secondary School Education Curriculum which include civic education and whose implementation commenced in September 2011 had placed big challenge to educators, especially secondary school teachers. In view of these, this study examined the influence of civic education on social interaction among secondary school students in Ekiti State.



Statement of the Problem

Education is seen as the major instrument for civilization and every nation aspiring to be civilized must invest in its educational sector. The neglect of civic education at the Secondary school level may have influence on the level of social interaction among secondary school students. It is therefore, not surprising, today to see some secondary school students engaging in indiscipline, antisocial behaviour, examination malpractice and other violent activities which has negatively affected the development of Nigeria as a nation. The re-introduction of civic education in the secondary school curriculum may encourage morals and national ethics among secondary school students and hence promote good social interaction among them. However, this paper examined the influence of civic education on social interaction among secondary school students in Ekiti State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the influence of civic education on social interaction among secondary school students in Ekiti State. Specifically, the study determined if civic education is properly taught in secondary schools in Ekiti State and also whether civic education has influence on the behaviour of secondary school students in Ekiti state.

Research Questions

1. Does efficient teaching of civic education influence the behaviour of secondary school students in Ekiti State?
2. Does civic education create positive social interaction among secondary school students in Ekiti State?

Research Hypotheses

1. Efficient teaching of civic education has no significant influence on the behaviour of secondary school students in Ekiti State.
2. Civic education has no significant influence on the

behaviour of secondary school students in Ekiti State.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design of the survey type. The population comprised all secondary schools' students across the sixteen Local Government Areas in Ekiti State. Two schools were stratifiably sampled from each of the sixteen Local Government Areas and in each school twenty (20) students were sampled through random sampling technique. This gives a total of 320 students across the state. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researchers, based on four point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (AD) and Disagree (D). Mean was used for analyzing the data obtained from this study. The analysis was done on the basis of the research hypotheses which were stated for the study.

Results

Research Hypothesis 1: Efficient teaching of civic education has no significant influence on the behaviour of Secondary School Students in Ekiti State.

Table I: Mean Responses of Students on efficient teaching of Civic Education in Ekiti State

S/N	Items	Mean	Decision
01	I learn more about values during the civic education class.	3.30	Agree
02	Civic education had improve my	2.50	Agree
03	I don't gain moral knowledge through civic education.	2.01	Disagree
04	I like attending the civic education	2.63	Agree
05	Norms and ethics are being taught in the civic education class.	2.53	Agree
Grand mean		2.59	Agree

From table I, item I which seek opinion on whether students learn more values during the civic education class has the mean of 3.30. A mean of 2.50 indicates that civic education had improved the knowledge of the respondents. Item 3 with a mean of 2.01 shows that the respondents disagree that they did not gain moral knowledge through civic education. A mean of 2.63 shows that respondents



like attending civic education class. While a mean of 2.53 shows that the respondents agreed that norms and ethics are being taught in the civic education class.

Research Hypothesis 2: Civic education has no significant influence on the behaviour of Secondary School Students in Ekiti State.

Table II: Mean responses of students on the influence of Civic Education on their behavior.

S/N	Items	Mean	Decision
01	Civic education inspires me to	2.70	Agree
02	I have the knowledge of the	2.50	Agree
03	I don't have any interest in	2.01	Disagree
04	Civic education widens my	2.54	Agree
05	Civic education inculcates social norms in me.	2.80	Agree
Grand mean		2.51	Agree

From table II, item 1 which seeks opinion of respondents on whether civic education had inspired them to behave normally in the society has the mean of 2.70. A mean of 2.50 indicates that the respondents have the knowledge of the values in their society. Mean of 2.01 shows that the respondents do not agree that they have no interest in the politics of their society. A mean of 2.54 shows that the respondents have a widened thought on political events in their society through civic education.

While item 5 has a mean of 2.80. This indicates that civic education inculcates in the respondents social norms.

Discussion

The findings of this study showed that efficient teaching of civic education has significant influence on the behaviour of secondary school students in Ekiti State. That is most of the sampled teachers possessed the necessary qualifications and teaching experiences to enable them teach civic related concepts. This is not consistent with Akintunde (2008) who reported that Civic education has not been given the required priority in our schools. The findings also is in agreement with the findings of Centre for Civic Education (1991) which

stated that the teaching of civic in schools among other things are to develop and transform Nigerian youths into effective and responsible citizens who are law abiding and knowledgeable in institutions of governance and democratic processes and rules as well as rights and duties of citizens It is also envisaged that civic education could help young people to develop sense of loyalty, honesty, discipline, courage and patriotism which are essential requirements for effective and functional citizenship in a democratic setting (NCSS, 2007).

The findings also revealed that civic education has significant influence on the behavior of Secondary School Students in Ekiti State. This is in line with FRN, (2004:p6) which stated that Civic Education is therefore geared towards helping Nigeria as a state to live in unity and harmony as one "indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and practice". Thus, civic education if effectively taught either as a separate school subject or part of Social Studies can encourage the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen as well as promote a full integration of the individual into the community..." (FRN, 2004:p7).

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

- 1 Adequate textbooks should be provided by the government at various level to secondary school students.
- 2 School authorities should take attendance to the class of civic education more serious.
- 3 Trained teachers should be allowed to teach civic education.
- 4 Civic education should be made compulsory for students in schools.
- 5 Parents should be made to attend interactive sessions in schools so as to relay the behavior of students at home.



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