

Civic Education At The Senior Basic Education In Nigeria: Issues And Challenges

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Abstract

This study sought to investigate the implementation of Civic Education at the senior Basic Education level. It is a descriptive survey study. The study was carried out in the capital cities of Anambra and Enugu states of Nigeria. A sample of 67 principals and teachers in selected secondary schools in both capital cities was used for the study. Purposive random sampling technique was used to draw 15 Universal Basic Education Schools in each state . Questionnaire instrument which is titled Universal Basic Civic Education Questionnaire (UBCEQ) was developed and face validated by two lecturers in the department of social science education and science education (measurement and evaluation), University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Three research questions guided the study. Data were analysed using mean to answer research questions 1 and 3 while simple percentage was used to answer research question 2. The result of the study reveals among others, teachers have poor attitudes towards the implementation of Civic Education at the Senior Basic Education level and that instructional materials for the effective teaching of Civic Education at senior Basic Education level are not available. The study concludes that proper implementation of civic education at the senior Basic education level will engender training of citizens that can contribute to national development. It recommends among others that federal government should make policy that will accelerate training and re-training of Civic education teachers for better productivity.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing violence in the social, political and economic spheres of Nigerian nation 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 as a result of these enormous problems that the Federal Government in the past introduced civic education as a curricular subject in our 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

Although, the Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the National Council on Education (NCE) and Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) made conscientious efforts to establish Civic Education Curriculum for the Upper Basic Education Arm (JSS1-3) and recently for senior secondary (ss1-3), 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.

Describing the socio-political condition of Nigeria in recent times, Ismail (2011:69) succinctly stated that “the national civic, political and economic landscape has remained beset by the same age-long problems that have always, hindered national development in Nigeria”. Infact, he specifically stated that:

The decision to solve some of these civic problems was the outcome of the concern for the development and transformation of Nigerian youths into effective and responsible citizens who will be able to productively contribute to the attainment of the millennium Development Goals (MDGS)

What the above view was pointing at is the efficacy of Civic Education Curricular in solving societal problems. Considering the weight of the above statement, one may be apt to ask such questions as: What is Civic Education? What is the state of the art of Civic Education in our senior Basic Education level in terms of provision of instructional and infrastructural materials as well as effective use of such materials for effective implementation of Civic Education? However, an attempt to answer these questions forms the basis of this study.

Civic Education has been widely conceived as a type of education that aids effective democratic process (Mehlinger 1977, Ganuju, 2011 and Wahab 2011). Collaborating with this view, Oyesiku, (2010) described Civic Education as a school subject that prepares people, especially the youths, to carry out their roles as citizens. In the same vein the National Orientation Agency (NOA 2006) was of the view that, the main philosophy behind the teaching and learning of Civic education Curriculum in Nigerian schools is the production of effective citizens and of forging a cohesive society that will support nation building by a way of classroom mediation of curriculum programmes.

Generally, Civic Education has been viewed by many academics as a course of study that is geared towards producing responsible and law abiding citizens (Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajileye, Abdulrahman and Anyaoha 2009 and Ogundare, 2011), For instance, Ukegbu et al (2009) outlined objectives of Civic Education to include:

- i. Developing and transforming the Nigeria youths into effective and responsible citizens by making them law-abiding.
- ii. Creating awareness of one’s rights, duties and obligations as citizens of this great nation and also to appreciate the rights of other citizens, and
- iii. Helping the young people to acquire a sense of loyalty, honesty, discipline, courage, dedication, respect, patriotism, hard work.... It inculcates in students, the spirit of nationalism and desirable habits, values and attitudes.

It is pertinent to note that certain facilities (human and non-human or infrastructural) as well as funding must be seriously taken into consideration if the stated objectives must be accomplished. Human facility refers to quality man-power or teachers who are last curriculum implementers. Teachers as the last curriculum implementer are expected to effectively utilize teaching methods/techniques as this determines the extent of achieving instructional objective(s). A teaching technique according to Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008:55), "is a specific way or aspect of a given method of teaching...which is chosen, organized and applied in a method by a teacher in his teaching interaction". The pertinent question one may ask is; to what extent does civic education teachers utilize instructional methods/techniques? Ganiyu (2011) was of the opinion that old method of teaching (traditional methods) were still in vogue among teachers in our school system. The issue of non-human facilities are of crucial importance for effective teaching. Non-human facilities are those infrastructural and instructional facilities needed for effective implementation of educational programmes. Onifade (2009) lamented on the problems of poor funding of education can cause in the provision of educational facilities. With the envisaged problems in our school system one wonders how the objective of Civic Education could be achieved. It is on this basis that the researcher

aimed at carrying out a research on the issues and challenges of teaching and learning of Civic Education at the Senior Basic Education level. This study therefore aimed at finding out challenges facing the teaching and learning of Civic Education at our senior basic education level.

The findings of this study will be of great importance to the Federal government, as it will help them enhance policy position on the need for the training of Civic Education teachers; provision of needed infrastructural and structural facilities. For teachers, it will help them acquire additional useful knowledge, skills and values that will help them to be efficient and effective Civic Education implementers.

To carry out the study the following research question were raised

Research Questions

- 1 What are the methods/techniques teacher uses for civic education instruction?
- 2 What are the available instructional aids for effective teaching of Civic Education?
- 3 To what extent are the available instructional aids used for effective Civic Education instruction?

Method:

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The study was carried out in the capital cities of Enugu and Anambra states. The choice of the two capital cities is because they are tickly populated with more number of schools and teachers that could be used for generalization. The population of the study comprised all the (36) principals and 76 Civic Education teachers at the Senior Basic Education level in the capital cities of the two states. The total population for the study is therefore 112

Purposive random sampling technique was used to draw 15 Universal Basic Education schools in each state. All the principals and Civic Education teachers in the sampled schools were used for the study. The total number of the principals is 30, while the civic education teachers are 37. The sample population used for the study is 67.

Instrument, titled Universal Basic Civic Education questionnaire was developed by the researchers to enable them elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaire

was made up of two sections. 'A and B' Section 'A' sought information on the personal data of the respondents, while section 'B' consisted of 30 items, incorporating 3 different clusters that answered the three research questions. Cluster 1, had 10 items (1-10), cluster 2, had 10 items (11-20), while cluster 3, had 10 items, (21-30). The instrument was face validated by two lecturers in the department of Social Science Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka.

The researcher employed four research assistants who helped in the distribution and collection of the instrument. Mean and simple percentage (%), were used to analyze data. Given the mid-point of 2.50 in a 4-point rating scale, any item with 2.50 and above was accepted to be a factor while any item with the mean of 2.49 and below was not accepted as a factor. On the other hand, for items on the percentage scale 50% is the bench mark. Any item below 50 percent (%) was not accepted as a factor.

Results

The findings of the study are presented in tables 1, 2 and 3 below.

Table 1: Mean ratings on the instructional methods/techniques for civic education instruction.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Decision
1	Teachers read printed media/materials like Newspapers, journals, magazines, seminars and conference papers to increase their knowledge and efficiency in the teaching of Civic Education	8	15	90	15	1.91	Disagree
2	Teachers listen to educative and informative programmes and documentaries on radio stations to acquire information on civic studies	40	90	50	22	2.72	Agree
3	Teachers watch home videos and films to acquire needed materials for instructional delivery	80	60	20	17	2.64	Agree
4	Teachers use observation, and interview techniques to carryout civic instruction	100	69	34	2	3.06	Agree
5	Field trip method is properly used in Civic Education instruction.	8	51	50	23	1.97	Disagree
6	Teacher's method for civic education instruction is mostly lecture method of teaching	120	75	12	6	3.18	Agree
7	Discussion is effectively utilized in Civic Education delivery.	40	30	80	7	2.34	Disagree
8	Dramatization or role play method is commonly used by Civic Education teachers	20	12	114	1	2.19	Disagree
9	Civic Education teachers make use of debate in carrying out Civic Education instruction	4	9	118	4	2.01	Disagree
10	Inquiry method of teaching is effectively utilized by the Civic Education instructors	8	12	120	1	2.10	Disagree
	GRAND X					2.41	Disagree

Key - SA - Strongly Agree A - Agree
D - Disagree SD - Strongly disagree

The finding from table 1, showed that Civic Education instructors at the senior Basic Education level have general poor attitude towards implementation of civic education curriculum with a grand mean score of 2.41 which is below the bench mark. However mean scores of items 2,3,4 and 6 indicated that most respondents agreed that teachers in the capital cities listen to educative programmes and documentaries on radio stations to acquire information for Civic instruction; watch home videos and films to acquire needed materials for instructional delivery; use observation and interview techniques to carry out civic instruction and use mostly lecture method to carry out instructional delivery in the Senior Basic Education level with mean scores of 2.72, 2.64, 3.06 and 3.18 respectively.

Table 2: Percentage response of Teachers on available instructional aids for effective teaching of civic Education at Senior Basic Education level.

S/N	ITEM	Available		Not available	
		Frequency.	%	Frequency	%
11	Copies of Nigerian constitution	62	93	5	7
12	Specimen copies of citizenship registration forms	6	24	51	76
13	Sample copies of national identity cards	3	4	64	96
14	Sample copies of international passport	7	10	60	90
15	Sample copies of birth certificate	2	3	65	97
16	School rules and regulations booklet	65	97	2	83
17	Flash cards depicting pictures on values	9	13	58	87
18	Video clip showing good citizens performing one duty or the other	11	6	56	84
19	Radio	1	1	66	99
20	Computers and their accessories	10	22	52	78

The results in Table 2, showed that most of the instructional aids for effective teaching of civic Education at Senior Basic Education level are not available as indicated by percentage responses of teachers on items 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19 and 20 with 76%, 96%, 90%, 97%, 87%, 84%, 99% and 78% respectively. However, percentage responses of teachers on items 11 and 16 which is 93% and 97% respectively showed that copies of Nigerian constitution and school rules an regulations booklet are the only available instructional aids for teaching civic Education at senior Basic Education level. The reason for this documentation is that the percentage responses of the teachers on the aforementioned items are 50% which is the benchmark for accepting an item as available.

Table 3: Mean scores of teachers on extent of use of the available instruction aids for effective civic Education instruction.

S/N	ITEM	VGE	GE	IE	VLE	X	DECISION
21	Copies of Nigerian Constitution	12	6	120	2	2.08	LE
22	Specimen copies of citizenship Registration forms	4	12	90	18	1.85	VLE

23	Samples copies of national identity cards	20	15	100	7	2.12	LE
24	Sample copies of international passport	16	9	60	30	1.72	VLE
25	Sample copies of birth certificate	8	6	60	33	1.60	VLE
26	School rules and regulations booklet	4	6	122	3	2.01	LE
27	Flash cards depicting pictures on values	8	12	80	21	1.81	VLE
28	Video clips showing good citizens Performing one duty or the other	20	12	60	29	1.81	VLE
20	Radio	4	3	44	43	1.40	VLE
30	Computers and their accessories	20	27	46	30	1.84	VLE
GRAND MEAN						1.83	VLE

Table 3, revealed that majority of the available instructional materials for effective teaching of Civic Education at senior Basic Education level are used to a very low extent with a grand mean score of 1.83.

However, the mean scores of items 21, 23, and 26, 2.09, 2.12 and 2.01 respectively showed that copies of Nigerian constitution, sample copies of national identity cards and school rules and regulations booklet are used to a low extent

DISCUSSION

The findings on table 1, revealed that civic Education instructors at the senior Basic Education level have general poor attitude towards implementation strategies. The methods or strategies teachers seem to apply are listening to educative programmes and documentaries on radio stations; watching home videos and films, use of observation and interview techniques and use of lecture methods to carry out instruction in the senior Basic education level. Perhaps, teachers' engagement in the above skills is conventional practices which they don't utilize during teaching process. This finding however, contradicts earlier statement by Ganiyu (2011) that old method of teaching were still in vogue among teachers. This implies that probably they engage in the above actions by chance not conscientiously towards using them in instructional delivery. The finding that teachers use lectures method most often in instructional delivery is in line with the view of Ezeani (1998:69) who opined that,

At the secondary school level, the lecture method could be used when introducing a new topic or unit; supplementary textbook materials, presenting important materials not easily obtainable; developing interest and appreciating important points after a unit of instruction; attempting to cover a lot of materials in short time.

One major disadvantage of lecture method is that it does not allow interactive cum participatory teaching and learning but encourages rote memorization of ideas in the

pedagogy. Hence, when lecture method dominates other approaches in the teaching of Civic Education at Senior Basic Education level, students can be made passive learners. Teachers poor usage of participatory approaches to instruction like field trip, discussion, dramatization, debate and inquiry as indicated in this study is a big challenge to implementation of Civic Education Curriculum at Senior Basic Education level. Perhaps the challenges to interactive and or participatory teaching and learning at the classroom level are compounded by the traditional structures and culture of the teacher-centered approach that perpetuates the one way teacher transmission of ideas but encourages limited engagement in teaching (Njoku, 2012). Exploring participatory approach to teaching civic Education at Senior Basic Education level appears to be more engaging and rewarding. However, popular methods of teaching comprise lecture, inductive method and discussion, other innovative methods that encourage critical thinking, creativity and productivity are rarely used in instructional delivery in secondary schools in Nigeria (Adediran, Ibrahim and Adelegun, 2012). Most teachers seem not to carry out instruction using participating approaches such as field trips, inquiry and dramatization because of their time consuming nature (Ezeudu, 2003). It could probably be that Civic Education teachers don't use participatory approach either because they lack knowledge of such method or because they are not fully aware of the efficacy of Civic Education to solving social problems in our society.

Table 2, showed that most of the instructional aids such as sample copies of the international passports, national identity cards, birth certificates, specimen copies of citizenship registration forms, flash cards depicting pictures on values, videos clips, radio and computers and their accessories are not available for effective teaching and learning of Civic Education at the Senior Basic Education level. The only available teaching aids are copies of Nigerian constitution and school rules and regulation booklets. This finding has far reaching implication in the achievement of the objective of Civic Education curriculum at Senior Basic Education levels. The findings agreed with Azikiwe (2006) who lamented that schools lack adequate supply of materials and suitable instructional materials.

Results in table 3 indicated that the identified instructional materials for effective teaching of Civic Education at senior Basic education level are used to a very low extent. The only teaching aids in the study that are used to a low extent (LE) are copies of Nigerian constitution, sample copies of national identity cards and school rules and regulations booklet probably because they can easily be accessed by the instructors. This finding seemed to collaborate the view of Bolick (2003) who avers that while some educators appreciate the potentials of instructional materials in teaching and learning, most teachers lag behind in using instructional aids during teaching and learning.

The finding indicated that computers and its accessories are used to a very low extent. The reason for this ugly trend in this 21st century may be that most schools teachers still lack skills in using computer to store, retrieve, assess and transmit information for effective teaching and learning (Ezegbe, 2009). This view is in line with (Tuayerinha, 2008:35) who succinctly stated that "Nigeria lacks the human skills and knowledge to fully integrate computer into its education". Another reason for low usage of computer in Teaching Civic Education at Senior Basic Education level is that most third world government especially Nigeria pay lip service to computer (Offorma and Ofoefuna, 1998: 102).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teaching of Civic Education at the senior Basic education level in Nigeria is well conceived, mostly now that Nigeria is seemed to be bedeviled by social issues like boko haraming, kidnapping, child trafficking, value degenerating, child labor, youth incivility, cyber crimes and other social evils in the high and low places. The subject will help inculcate right form of citizenship training to the citizenry at their youthful age so that they grow with loyalty and patriotism that the nation demands for its development. This is because no country can develop in face of crisis, social incoherence and disrespect to the ideals of the nation. This study concludes that when civic Education is properly implemented at the senior Basic Education level with requisite instructional methods and media, citizens that will contribute to the development of the nation will be produced.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1) Federal government should make policy that will enhance training and re-training of civic Education teachers for successful implementation of civic education. This if done would promote teaching and learning of the Civic Education.
- 2) Governments at all levels, individuals, corporate organizations should participate in the provision of relevant instructional materials for effective teaching and learning of Civic Education as this would make for easy teaching and practical learning of Civic Education for citizenship development.
- 3) Governments should organize workshops, seminars and symposia for teachers to inculcate in them the relevance of utilization of teaching aids in instructional delivery, additional useful knowledge, skills and values that will help them to be efficient and effective civic Education Implementers.
- 4) Governments should step up their financial allocations to secondary education to guarantee easy procurement of instructional aids for effective implementation of the civic education at the senior Basic Education level.
- 5) Other stake holders such as, Parent Teachers' Association(PTA), Non-Governmental Organization should equally help, in the procurement and refurbishment of infrastructural and instructional facilities.

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