

Full Length Research Paper

Effects of citizenship education component of social studies on civic literacy and attachment of upper basic students in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria

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The purpose of this paper was to find out the effect of citizenship education component of social studies on the civic literacy and attachment of upper basic students in Ilorin Metropolis. In this study, 113 students, involving 67 male and 46 female students participated in the summer school programme organised during the long vacation. The study was a quasi-experimental and pre-test post-test. The participants were subjected to treatment for four weeks on citizenship education programme. The finding showed that there was a significant difference in the mean score of the participants as a result of the treatment. It was also discovered that there was no significant difference in the mean gain scores of the participants on the basis of gender. Based on the findings, it was suggested that citizenship education that promote civic literacy and attachment for students should be organised regularly.

Key words: Effect, citizenship education components, social studies, civic literacy, attachment, upper basic students.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the problems of Nigeria as a nation had attracted and occupied the attention of scholars, activists, well meaning individuals and international organisations. This is because, if the situation is not arrested, Nigeria, known as the giant of Africa, may become a matter of history. There is the widespread indiscipline, inter-religious crisis, as well as, inter and intra-ethnic violence in the country.

Among these crises are ethnicities, suspicion and

distrust among the various groups; Niger delta crisis, the problem of North- South dichotomy, the problem of the 'Boko Haram', a religious crisis in Borno State which is spreading to other Northern states call for confederacy and secession. Others include; corruption, loss of value, negative attitude to national issues, and lack of patriotism, kidnapping and a host of other indiscipline practices, which has made other countries to look down on Nigerians and subject them to inhuman treatment, which offend their psyche.

Nduka (2004) observed that Nigerians exhibit deplorable ethnical attitudes in virtually every aspect of life. Indiscipline, a common feature in the country is exemplified, for by scrambling or riotous behaviour in public places, recklessness in driving, lack of respect for law and order. In addition, he noted that there is rampant avarice, cheating and exploitation of fellow citizens, lack of right attitude to work, pervasiveness, and lack of commitment to a sound ethical base, pacesetters in

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Abbreviations: EFCC, Economic and Financial Crime Commission; ICPC, Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences commission; NAO, National Orientation Agency; MAMSER, Mass Mobilization for Economic Recovery, Self-reliance and Social Justice; WAI, War Against Indiscipline.

cheating, stealing and fraud including the notorious advance fee fraud 419. Omo-Ojugo (2009) observed that people in a heterogeneous society such as Nigeria are always characterized by ethnic group, class and individual interests, intentions, motives, needs, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, fears and anxieties. These diversities, however, have been positively harnessed for greatness by other nations of the world. He lamented that the case has been quite different in Nigeria. The differences have served as the bane of Nigeria's development.

Consequently, Nigeria as a nation has been besieged by an array of seemingly intractable social, economic and political problems. Several conscious efforts, according to Omo-Ojugo (2009), have been made by the government to instil discipline, maintain peace and stability in Nigeria without much success. Among these include; Ethical Revolution (1983), war against indiscipline (WAI) 1984, Mass Mobilization for Economic recovery, self-reliance and social justice (MAMSER) 1987,) National Orientation Agency (NAO) 1993, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences commission (ICPC) 2002. Omo- ojugo (2009) regretted that these efforts have not yielded much needed results to improve the nation's value system.

Various suggestions from well-meaning individuals are being made to ensure that Nigeria remain an indivisible entity where every Nigerian will consider himself a Nigerian first before seeing himself as a Yoruba, Igbo or Hausa and so on. In other words, a Nigeria in which the national consciousness of her citizens will be high. One of the means through which the government has attempted to solve the problem is the introduction of social studies in the Nigerian educational system. Social studies have become the medium through which citizenship education is taught at the basic education level. Social Studies orientation emphasizes the transmission of citizenship learning such as moral, values and attitudes.

Yusuf (2008) noted that citizenship education has become an increasingly important means for countries to educate their citizens about their rights and responsibilities. Increasing pluralism within states has encouraged the development of citizenship education that goes beyond simple 'patriotic' models of citizenship requiring uncritical loyalty to their ethnic group. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) in the National Policy of Education, one of the objectives of social studies is the cultivation of the right type of attitudes and values for the survival of individuals and the Nigerian society. Social studies curriculum is therefore, developed to include citizenship education, which emphasizes how individuals cultivate positive attitudes to their rights, freedom, duties and obligations as citizens. Yusuf (2008) stated that citizenship education in the social studies curriculum includes all the topics that can make the citizens to be well informed to become more

alive to their responsibilities and obligations to themselves, fellow human beings and the society at large. In essence, citizenship education should promote civic literacy and civic attachment. These range from knowledge about political structures, democratic processes, and legal obligations and status, to social awareness and consciousness, wherein individuals have rights and responsibilities that guide their interactions with others. Members of the society are committed to working together, based on respect for self and others. Underpinning such a society is constructive notions about identity, relationships with others, difference and diversity, and social justice and equity.

According to Jekayinfa (2004), citizenship education through social studies is to produce healthy, good and active citizens who are patriotic, responsible, disciplined, well- informed and conscientious. In other words, citizenship education prepares the child for social responsibility. From the foregoing, citizenship education includes civic literacy and civic attachment.

According to Flanagan and Faison (2001), civic literacy refers to the knowledge about community affairs, political issues and the processes whereby citizens effect change, while civic attachment indicates the affective or emotional connection to the community. Both these aspects have been incorporated in approaches to citizenship education, where there has been an emphasis on developing understandings of how government works, learning the skills required to become involved in the processes of government, and recognizing the worth of individuals (Civics Expert Group, 1994). What this means is that a good citizen should possess both civic literacy and attachment.

If Nigeria and indeed its democracy are to remain secure and stable, the citizens must believe in the system and believe that it works for people like them. In this present uncertain situation, the unity of Nigeria and democracy is under threat. Civic literacy and attachment can be used to foster much needed unity for the survival and development of the nation. In this 21st century, and the unfortunate intra/inter ethnic and religious clashes, ethnic militia, kidnapping, bomb blast, indiscipline, including leadership crises that have become a common occurrence in Nigeria, it becomes imperative to emphasise citizenship education component of social studies as it relates to civic literacy and attachment. In other words, civic literacy and attachment involve a set of practices and activities aimed at making individuals well informed and better equipped to participate actively in democratic life by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in society. That is why Osakwe and Itejere (1993) contented that citizenship education, as a system for the acquisition and internalization of the values, sentiment and norms of society in which they live and actually get involved to ensure that the common good of the citizens is catered for, including resisting anti-social and unguided youthful exuberance.

Probably, that is why Civics Expert Group (1994) states that the manifestation of civic literacy and attachment can be seen in the behaviour trait such as critical thinking, political activism, inquiry, goals and value of good citizenship. According to Dave (2006), the aim of citizenship classes both formal and informal, is to develop young people into responsible citizens, who understand their rights and responsibilities and can play an active part in society. In other words, citizenship education, that promotes civic literacy and attachment, requires a citizen to be well informed, gather facts, reject ethnocentrism, religious jingoism and encourage national consciousness. That means that, citizenship education will develop in individuals, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to show concern for the well being and dignity of others, respecting the worth of others and approaching civil decision in a rational manner.

Various attempts at different times have been made by government agencies, such as Ministries of Education, Sports, Information and Youth Development, religious and voluntary organizations as the NASFAT, Boys Brigade, Man O War, and so on to create opportunities for students and members respectively to gain knowledge and understanding of certain desirable values and social attributes needed for civic consciousness. This is usually organised during the long vacation, to reduce the risk while the schools are on vacation. According to Omo Ojugo (2009), this is because; most Nigerian children during school vacation are like sheep without a shepherd. The importance of vacation programmes for young people, be they educational, leadership and religious cannot be over emphasised. Probably, that is why Ofor (1998) and Johnson (2001) believed that the programmes have potency for redirecting the minds and attention of youth to positive, productive and worthy thoughts. Hence, the need for this study. However, many people are sceptical about the worth of the long vacation programmes. Many people in Nigeria seem to view it as a way of just occupying the young and preventing them from dangers and bad influences. People hold such views perhaps because there are yet not empirical findings on the effects of such programmes on the civic literacy and attachment of the youth. Therefore, this study is to find out the effect of citizenship education component of social studies on the civic literacy and attachment of basic school students.

Research questions

1. Is there any significant difference in the mean gain score of basic school students as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education?
2. Is there any significant difference in the mean gain score of male and female basic school students as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in this study:

H₁: The level of civic literacy and attachment of basic school students will not differ significantly as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education.

H₀₂: The level of civic literacy and attachment of male and female basic school students will not differ significantly as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was a quasi-experimental and pre-test post-test design. An intact group of 113 of 67 male to 46 female basic school students participated in the study. At the beginning of the programme, the participants pre-tested using a fifty-item multiple choice tests to assess the participants' civic literacy and attachment. The test items covered knowledge of and love for their country, national consciousness, unity, and respect for national symbols, moral values, civic responsibility, tolerance and getting along well with others. Each corrected item attracted two marks and a total obtainable mark of 100. Mean was used to answer the research questions while ANOVA is used to determine the significant difference in the mean gain score between the pre-test and post-test of the participants.

RESULTS

Research questions

1. Is there any significant difference in the mean gain score of basic school students as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education? (Table 1).
The analysis revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean between the pre test (44.0177) and post test (64.9646) of participants in the citizenship programme.
2. Is there any significant difference in the mean gain score of male and female basic school students as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education? (Table 2).

The analysis revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean gain score of male (67.7910) and female (68.2174) participants.

Research hypotheses

H₁: The level of civic literacy and attachment of basic school students will not differ significantly as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education (Table 3).

From the analysis, it is revealed that there was a significant difference in the mean score between the pre-

Table 1. Mean of pre-test and post-test scores.

Treatment	Pre test	Post test
Total mean	44.0177	64.9646
N	113	113
Std. deviation	5.76625	4.96403

Table 2. Mean of pre-test and post-test scores male and female basic students.

Gender		Pre test	Post test
Male	Mean	43.8806	67.7910
	N	67	67
	Std. deviation	5.803066	5.13024
Female	Mean	44.2174	68.2174
	N	46	46
	Std. deviation	5.76932	4.75588
Total mean		44.0177	64.9646
N		113	113
Std. deviation		5.76625	4.96403

Table 3. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of pre test and post test scores.

Variable	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Pre test between groups	704.811	1	704.811	25.913	0.000
Within group	3019.154	111	27.200		
Total	3723.965	112			
Post test between groups	401.701	1	401.701	18.908	0.000
Within group	2358.157	111	21.245		
Total	2759.858	112			

test and post test scores of the students who participated in the citizenship education programme organised in the long vacation. The results indicate that there is significant difference between the pre-test post-test mean scores of the subjects. This is because at 0.05 level of significance, the Sig. Was 0.000. The hypothesis is therefore rejected.

H₂: The level of civic literacy and attachment of male and female basic school students will not differ significantly as a result of exposure to a programme of citizenship education (Table 4).

The analysis showed that there was significant difference in the mean gain score of male and female basic students who were given treatment on citizenship

education. The result indicated that at 0.05 level of significance, the Sig. was 656. The Sig. was greater than 0.05 and therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

DISCUSSION

The findings have shown that H₁ has been rejected. That is, there is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean gain scores of students, in favour of post-test. This means that the treatment had effect on the civic literacy and attachment of the participants. The results confirm the views of Yusuf (2008) and Omo Ojugo (2009) that educational and socio-civic activities organized for youth during school vacation have positive impact on

Table 4. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of pre test and post test scores of male and female students.

Variable	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Pre test					
between groups	3.094	1	3.094	0.092	0.762
Within group	3720.871	111	33.521		
Total	3723.965	112			
Post test					
between groups	4.958	1	4.958	0.200	0.656
Within group	2754.901	111	24.819		
Total	2759.858	112			

their knowledge of the country, value orientations and personality development. On H_2 , the results indicated that no significant difference existed between the male and female participants men gain score of pre-test and post-test. In other words, both male and female students who participated in the programme acquired civic literacy and attachment. This means that gender difference did not mediate in the mean gain score of the participants. The finding is in support of the views of Ofor (1998) and Johnson (2001) who noted that when youth are exposed to educational or leadership or religious training and orientations during school vacation, whether male or female, their minds and attentions are redirected towards productive and worthy thoughts that are necessary for national development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results of this study, it could be concluded that citizenship education programmes organized for the students during school vacations had positive effects on the civic literacy and civic attachment of youth. In other words, the more the students are exposed to citizenship education components of social studies on a regular basis, the more they acquire the needed civic literacy and attachment. Based on the findings and discussion in this study, the following recommendations have been made.

1. The citizenship education component of social studies should be taught using appropriate methods that would produce well informed and effective citizens.
2. Encouragement, through sponsorship, should be provided for organizations, religious bodies and professionals that organize leadership and civic education for youth, especially when they are on school vacations.
3. Parents should be encouraged to make their children participate in holiday civic education programmes.
4. Well to do individuals should be encouraged to sponsor vacation civic education programmes for children in their domains.
5. Social studies teachers should be encouraged to undergo workshops, seminars and other forms of training

to be equipped in appropriate pedagogy needed for the all round development of the learners.

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