

EFFECTS OF TEACHING CITIZENSHIP COMPONENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES ON PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

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Abstract

Most Nigerians are characterized with non-conformity with democratic principles that would have brought desired transformation in the Nation. This study therefore investigated effect of teaching citizenship education component of Social Studies on primary School Pupils' civic knowledge and skills. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a pretest-post test quasi experimental design. One primary school was purposively selected in Oluponna Local Government Area of Osun State using 30 pupils. Two instruments used to collect data were, "Civic knowledge and skills Test" and "Social Studies instructional guide". The participants were exposed to treatment for seven weeks on citizenship education concepts. Data collected were analysed using t-test. The result showed that there was a significant effect of treatment on pupils civic knowledge and skills. It was also shown that there was no significant difference in civic knowledge of pupils but significant on skills based on gender: The study concluded that effective teaching of Social Studies could promote Civic knowledge and development of intellectual and participator civic skills in primary school pupils in Nigeria.

Introduction

The struggle for national development has been the major concern of all successive governments, the policy makers and all well meaning stakeholders in the field of education in Nigeria. Education is being recognized by the Federal Government of Nigeria as " an instrument per excellence for effecting National Development" as well as a dynamic instrument of change (FRN, 2004). In the light of this, the National objectives which serve as the foundation for the objectives of the Nigerian National Policy on Education are: (1) to build a free and democratic society; (2) to build a just and egalitarian society; (3) to build a united and self-reliant nation; (4) to build a great and dynamic economy and (5) to build a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (FRN, 2004). Today, Nigeria as a nation is making effort to ensure qualitative and quantitative transformation of Nigerian societies which must involve every citizen.

However, Nigeria is thriving in the mist of corruption and bribery, nepotism, tribalism, religious intolerance, dishonesty, terrorism, political violence, killing, human and material wastage, forgery, lack of dedicated leadership, negative attitude to work, absence of patriotic spirit (Odanye, 2012; Bozimo & Ikwumelu; 2009). No Nation can develop in the mist of the aforementioned formidable obstacles to Nation building. Hence, there is the need for functional education to train up human beings' mind for promotion of human values that will result to desired transformation in the country. To participate in civic life, young people need skills and knowledge to meet up with the challenges of neglect of societal values. Civic education can occur in many subjects, but Social Studies contents are particularly valuable opportunities to learn civic knowledge (Okafor, 2012; Yusuf, Agbonna, Yekayinfa & Saliu, 2011). Further, 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 conscious wherein individuals have rights and responsibilities that guide their interactions with others for societal development. 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.

Despite the inclusion of Social Studies in Nigerian curriculum, an average Nigerian do not support democratic institutions and values, fail to build trust in government and elected officials, and poor civic involvement in important areas such as voting and volunteering (Gambari, 2008). Citizenship education attempts to inculcate in an individual, certain political and social values which need to transform and sustain the right society (Odanye, 2012).

Essential components of citizenship education are civic knowledge and civic skills (Okafor, 2012). Civic knowledge is concerned with content or what citizens ought to know; the subject matters. The second essential components of citizenship education in a democratic society is civic skills, citizens need not to acquire body of knowledge but intellectual and participatory skills to interact, monitoring and influencing issues. This study therefore examined the effects of teaching citizenship education components of Social Studies on civic knowledge and skills of primary school pupils.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of treatment on pupils

(a) civic knowledge; and

(b) civic skills.

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of gender on pupils'

(a) civic knowledge; and

(b) civic skills.

Method

The study is a quasi-experimental one which adopted the pretest- posttest group design. The participants for the study were 30 primary four pupils, drawn from one primary school purposively selected from Oluponna Local Government Area of Osun State. Two instruments were used in the collection of data were, "Civic Knowledge and Skills Test" and "Social Studies Instructional Guide' "The researcher engaged the pupils in a study that spanned seven weeks as follows:

1st week: The researcher selected some topics on which some questions were drawn (20 questions).

The selected topics are:

- i. Family: Duties of parent to their children
Duties of children to their parent
- ii. Patriotism: Problem of ethnicity and group loyalty
- iii. Citizenship
- iv. Leadership

2nd Week: The researcher tested the knowledge of the pupils

through research assistants before teaching them the topics.

3rd week: Teacher taught pupils (i) Duties of parent to their children (ii) Duties of parents to their children

4th Week: The teacher taught pupils patriotism, problem of ethnicity and group loyalty.

5th Week: Citizenship

6th Week: Leadership- types of leadership and qualities of a good leader

7th Week: post-test

Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using t-test in testing hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Ho1: There is no significant effect of treatment on pupils

(a) civic knowledge; and

(b) civic skills.

Table 1: t- test Analysis of the Effect of Treatment on Pupils Civic Knowledge

Scores	N	X	SD	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
Pre-test	30	11.75	12.94	1.84	1.701	*S
Post-test	30	16.00	9.26			

*Significant @p< 0.05; df= 28.

From table 1, pupils pretest and post-test scores on civic knowledge when subjected to t- test statistical analysis yielded the calculated value of 1.84 which was greater than the critical-value of 1.701 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that says

there is no significant effect of treatment on pupils' knowledge was rejected.

Table 2: t- test Analysis of the Effect of Treatment on Pupils'

Scores	N	X	SD	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
Pre-test	30	7.29	23.74	11.68	1.701	*S
Post-test	30	15.31	17.52			

*Significant @ $p < 0.05$; $df = 28$.

From table 2 above, pupils pretest and post-test scores on Civic skills when subjected to t- test statistical analysis yielded the calculated t- value is 11.68 which was greater than the critical value of 1.701 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not held. Hence there is significant effect of treatment on pupils' civic skills.

Ho2: There is no significant effect of gender on pupils

(a) civic knowledge; and

(b) civic skills.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of the Effect of Gender on Pupils' Civic Knowledge

Civic knowledge	Male	Female	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
Posttest(x)	16.50	15.50	0.231	1.701	NS
Pretest(x)	12.50	11.00			
Mean Difference	4.00	4.50			
SD	13.26	11.73			
Effect Size	0.30	0.38			

Not Significant @ $p < 0.05$; $df = 28$.

From table 3, the effect of gender on pupils civic knowledge are 0.30 and 0.38 for male and female respectively. When the data is subjected to t- test statistical analysis, the calculated t-value of 0.231 is less than the t-critical value of 1.701 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which says there is no significant effect of gender on pupils' civic knowledge is held. Hence there is no significant effect of gender on pupils' civic knowledge.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Effect of Gender on Pupils Civic Skills

Civic knowledge	Male	Female	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
Posttest(x)	14.76	15.86	7.37	1.701	*S
Pretest(x)	8.05	6.53			
Mean Difference	6.71	9.33			
SD	11.35	9.33			
Effect Size	0.59	0.98			

*Significant @ $p < 0.05$; $df = 28$.

Table 4 above shows the effect of gender on pupils civic skills are 0.59 and 0.98 for male and female respectively. When the data is subjected to t- test statistical analysis, the calculated t-value of 7.37

is greater than the t-critical value of 1.701 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which says that there is no significant effect of gender on pupils' civic skills is not held. This means that there is Significant effect of gender on pupils' civic skills

Discussion

Table 1 revealed that there is significant effect of treatment on pupils' civic knowledge. This means that pupils civic knowledge is significantly influenced by the treatment. It is therefore evident that Social Studies can provide citizenry opportunities to acquire learning experiences on civic life, leadership and so on to make informed decision. This result is corroborated by Okam (2008) and Mezieobi

(2011) who reported that Social Studies education is an innovative curriculum design for developing and creating prospective effective citizens.

The result on table 2 revealed that there is significant effect of treatment on pupils' civic skills. Therefore, the null hypothesis which says there is no significant effect of treatment on pupils' civic skills is not held. This means that pupils' civic skills are significantly influenced by the treatment. The result confirmed the reports of Ogunbiyi and Soluade (2011) and Kehinde-Awoyele and Jekayinoluwa (2012) that Social Studies make citizens to acquire intellectual and participatory skills necessary for development of the society.

Table 3 revealed that there is no significant effect of gender on pupils' civic knowledge. This means that there is no significant effect of gender on pupils' civic knowledge. Both male and female pupils responded equally to the treatment and acquired the knowledge or the concepts taught on the same level, though female slightly perform better than male. This is in support of Yusuf, Agbonna, Yekayinta and Saliu (2011) who noted that whether male or female are exposed to civic training, their minds are redirected towards productive and worthy thoughts that are necessary for national development.

The finding on table 4 revealed that there is significant effect of gender on pupils' civic skills. The result was an indication that female and male pupils performed differently. Female pupils perform better than their male counterpart. The finding is in agreement with Macdonald and Hara (2010) who reported that there was a significant gender difference in performance of male and female in environmental education. On the other hand, this finding contradicted the finding of Gbadamosi (2011) who reported that gender had no significant effect on learning outcomes.

Conclusion

Findings from this study revealed that Social Studies teaching in primary schools could have significant effect on pupils' civic knowledge and skills and academic performance. The curriculum help young learners to understand political, economic, social and technological spheres of human existence in integrated forms to address specific and diverse problem of mankind. From the available result, it could be deduced that by teaching the young ones Social Studies, they can become good leaders of tomorrow and be academically sound since they could be furnished with useful information about their environment and the people far and near.

Further, if Social Studies is effectively taught it will cover the objectives of civic education instead of separating civics from Social Studies which is duplication, that promotes democratic citizenry.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are put forward for the purpose of shaping and equipping pupils as good future leaders and inculcating in them the democratic principles, promoting peaceful co-existence and solving social and political problems undermine nation building in Nigeria. In this regard, attention must be given to effective teaching of Social Studies teachers through pre-service and in-service training.

Also, there is the need to change orientation and notion about Social Studies as some people see it as a common course that people rushed into when they have no hope of meeting up in other fields of study. It must be well handled as a problem solving subject. Moreover, Social Studies must be taught in our schools by only the specialist in the field, for this to be done, government needs to employ Social Studies specialist to teach the subject. In addition, Social Studies must not be taught like History we must relate it to the learners' situation and environment.

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