
CONTRIBUTIONS OF CIVIC EDUCATION ON
AWARENESS OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES AS PERCEIVED
BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SAGBAMA
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the contributions of Civic Education on awareness of democratic values as perceived by secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research type was adopted for the study while senior secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area, Bayelsa State constituted the target population. 300 senior secondary school students were systematically selected and used as sample from ten schools out of the twenty one schools in the area. 11-items researcher's designed questionnaire titled "Civic Education and Students' Awareness of Democratic Values Questionnaire (CESADVQ)" was used as instrument for data collection. The validity of the instrument was established by experts in the Department of Social Science Education, Niger Delta University. A test-retest method was deployed to determine the reliability of the

instrument where the two sets of scores was correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation in which a reliability index of 0.68 was obtained. Mean score was used to analyze the data at a decision threshold of 2.50. Findings revealed that the teaching and learning of Civic Education contributions on the democratic values of fairness, peaceful co-existence and justice among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa state. Thus, it was concluded that the continuous teaching and learning of Civic Education in schools would create a new population of citizens where democratic norms, values and culture would be seen in their conducts. Therefore, the study recommended among others that participatory approach should be adopted by teachers in delivering instruction to the students during Civic education classes.

Keywords: Contributions, Civic Education, Awareness, Democratic Values, Citizenship

Introduction

In Nigeria, education is seen as the pivot of any meaningful development, be it social, economic, technological and political (Ezekwesili, 2006). Evidently, it is seen not only as an instrument for accelerated national development but also the basis for integrating individuals into sound and effective citizen (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Accordingly, education in the opinion of Offorma (2009) is the systematic process of providing information with a view to help in developing the physical, mental, social, emotional, political and economical compositions of an inexperienced person. It is also seen as the process through which individuals are made functional members of their society. Thus, it is a process through which the young or inexperienced acquire knowledge, values and skills, which are needed to enhance his/her potentialities and self-actualization (Obemeata, 2003).

Effective participation in democratic governance by citizens is a major concern of all democracies including Nigeria. This no doubt has influenced the premium placed on the education of citizens by the state for active participation in democratic governance and general well-being of the society. Arguably, the role of education (through the auspices of the school) in promoting civic competence seems to have been adequately reflected in relevant literature. (Ogundare, 2000). For instance, it has been argued that any school subject in the educational system is capable of educating for citizenship depending on how it is taught (Udoh, 2000). However, other schools of thought (Obebe, 2005, Osho, 2007) believe that certain school subjects by virtue of their philosophy, nature, contents and methodological insight or approaches are better strategically positioned to provide effective citizenship education.

Civic education is one of the innovative subjects in the Nigerian educational system. Its inclusion at the basic education level in Nigeria i.e., primary and junior secondary school and its subsequent elevation to the status of core or compulsory subject is a clear reflection of its perceived importance (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). In Nigeria, social studies is generally defined to mean “the study of man’s interaction with his environment – Physical and social (Nigerian Education Research and Development Council, 2007). It is therefore concerned with the reciprocal relationship between man and his environment in respect of how he is influenced by it and vice versa (Adaralegbe, 1981). These influences (Physical and social) define and determine man’s belief, occupation, use of natural and man-made resources etc.

Similarly, the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS, 2007) define Social Studies as “the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence”. This position is further collaborated by Ajiboye (2008) who argues that the ultimate goal of social studies education is citizenship training and that civic issues had always been part of the subject since its inception. Currently, the goals of Basic Education social studies curricula in Nigeria include helping Nigerian pupils:

- a) Develop the ability to adapt to their changing environment;
- b) Become responsive and disciplined individuals capable and willing to contribute to the development of the societies.
- c) Imbibe the right types of values.
- d) Develop a sense of comprehension towards other people, their culture, history and those fundamental things that make them human.
- e) Develop the capacity to recognize the many dimensions of being human in different cultures and social contents.
- f) Develop a sense of solidarity and sharing based on a sense of security in one's own identity (NERDC, 2007).

Avaro (2001) defined democratic values “as the fundamental beliefs and constitutional principles which guide the democratic government put in place in a particular society”. They are ethos that regulates the extent, level and involvement of participants in a democracy. Some of these values of Nigerian democracies are freedom, equality (one-man-one vote), justice, toleration of diversity, unity (national integration), national loyalty (as against sectional loyalty), rule of law, separation of powers, checks and balances, transparency, patriotism, dignity of human person, representative government, self-reliance, due process, electoral credibility (citizens vote must count), common good (acting in the best interest), popular consent, supremacy of the people, toleration of opposition and legitimacy (FRN, 1999; Ojo, 2003; NERDC, 2005; Nnamdi, 2009). They are in turn determined by the factors of or the interplay of political culture, civic or citizenship education and the political experiences of the society in question. It is against this background that this study intends to examine the influence of Civic Education on Awareness of Democratic Values among Secondary School Student in Sagbama Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

From several interactions with students especially during elections and others civic engagements, the extent to which students are aware of their rights, understand and/or have internalized known democratic values is not certain. There appears to be

palpable apprehension when one examines the undemocratic attitudes, level of incivility prevalence among our students and the ultimate manifestation of negative behaviours in our democracy. This could be as result of the fact that most students are not well abreast with democratic values and civic duties/responsibilities expected from them. Or probably Civic Education has not been taught thoroughly in our secondary schools. This, no doubt, had negative effects on the values and civic engagements of the Nigerian citizens (Falade & Adeyemi, 2015).

Ainiyekagbon and Uzamere (2014) examined the extent to which Nigerian undergraduate youths are regulated by democratic ethos of equality (one-man-one vote), patriotism, honesty, respect, tolerance, rule of law, etc. while discharging their civic duties; and noted that undergraduate youths awareness, understanding, internalization and adherence to democratic values during civic practices is selective of institution types (whether public or private) but not selective of programmes (whether full-time or part-time). Dania (2015) investigated Civic Education as a collaborative dimension of Social Studies Education in attainment of political ethics in Nigeria, and observed that there is no significant difference in the opinion of Social Studies teachers on Civic Education as a collaborative dimension of Social Studies Education in the attainment of political ethics; there is significant difference between male and female Social Studies teachers opinion on Civic Education as a collaborative dimension of Social Studies Education in the attainment of political ethics; there is significant difference between the opinion of urban and rural Social Studies teachers on Civic Education as a collaborative dimension of Social Studies Education in the attainment of political ethics.

Samuel (2015) appraised the effective implementation of the Civic Education curriculum at the basic and senior secondary levels in Lagos and Ogun states, in the south-western geo-political zone of Nigeria using open and closed questionnaires and as well as focus group discussions. Findings from Samuel's study showed that classroom civic curriculum implementation focused more on learners' knowledge constructions with less emphasis on developing skills and dispositions due to inadequate school extracurricular

programmes. In line with the objectives, teachers focus more on political knowledge at the expense of nongovernmental issues.

Omotoso, Fademi, and Popoola (2017) investigated the influence of Civic Education on Social Character of senior secondary school students in Ilorin South, Nigeria; and reported that Civic Education had significant social influence on Senior Secondary school students, the society and Nigeria at large. Similarly, using a descriptive survey research type, Adeyemi (2018) investigated the extent of implementation of the Civic Education curriculum content in senior secondary schools in Osun State and reported that not less than 84.0% of the students agreed that the contents of Civic Education curriculum are relevant, whereas, percentage of students ranging from 85.3 to 100.0% indicated that the recommended textbook contents adequately covered the curriculum contents of Civic Education.

Nevertheless, going through the empirical evidences as shown from the related empirical literature, it is glaring that some research gaps still needs to be bridged. Hence, this study examined the contributions of Civic Education on awareness of democratic values as perceived by secondary school students.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the contributions of Civic Education on awareness of democratic values as perceived by secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. ascertain the contributions of Civic Education on awareness of the democratic value of fairness among secondary school students.
- ii. determine the contributions of Civic Education on awareness of the democratic value of peaceful coexistence among secondary school students.
- iii. investigate the contributions of Civic Education on awareness of the democratic value of justice among secondary school students.

Research Questions

To achieve the specific objectives of this study, the following research questions were answered:

- i. To what extent does Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of fairness among secondary school students?
- ii. To what extent does Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of peaceful coexistence among secondary school students?
- iii. To what extent does Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value justice among secondary school students?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive design to get relevant information on the contributions of Civic Education on awareness of democratic values as perceived by secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. The target population of the study consisted of all senior secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. A systematic sampling technique was used to sample 300 senior secondary students of public secondary schools. The instrument for data collection was a researcher's designed 11-items questionnaire titled "Civic Education and Students' Awareness of Democratic Values Questionnaire (CESADVQ)". The CESADVQ consisted of two sections (A & B). Section 'A' focused on the respondents' demographic variables such as gender and class while section 'B' consisted of 11 items that addressed the three research questions. The instrument was structured based on a modified 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) which will be scored respectively as 4, 3, 2, and 1.

The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by two experts in Test and Measurement in the Department of Educational Foundations, Niger Delta University, Bayelsa State. The expert's comments and observations were used to modify the instrument before administering to the respondents.

The test retest technique was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The research instrument was administered twice to sample of 20 students outside the study area within a space of two weeks. The result of the first and second responses was correlated using Pearson Product Moment Coefficient (PPMC) which yielded a reliability index of 0.68. The Researchers personally visited the secondary schools under the research locale in which three days was used to distribute the copies of questionnaire. The data collected from respondents was analyzed using Mean score where items with a mean of 2.50 and above were accepted and items with less than 2.50 were rejected.

Results

Analysis of Demographic Variables

On the basis of the responses from the questionnaires collected, the following tables are developed. The data collected are analysed using grand mean.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	153	51
Male	147	49
Total	300	100

Table 1 indicated that 153(51%) of the respondents were female, while remaining 147(49%) respondents were male.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
15-16	144	48
17-18	106	35
19-20	48	15
21-22	1	2
Total	300	100

In Table 2, the 15-16 years group constituted 48 percent of respondents and was highest number of respondents followed by 17-18 years with 35 percent and then the 19-20 years which made up 15 percent of the respondents. The lowest number of respondents was within the 21-22 years with 2%.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One: To what extent does Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of fairness among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area?

Table 3: Contributions of Civic Education to the Awareness of the Democratic Value of Fairness among Secondary School Students

S/N	d	Sd	d	d	d	Sd	d	d	\bar{X}	d	
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	d		d	d	d	d	d	d	\bar{X}	d	

Table 3 displays the contributions of Civic Education on the democratic value of fairness among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area. On a closer look at the table, one can discover that all the three items were rated agreed with mean scores of 3.32, 2.94 and 2.70 respectively. The aggregate mean

was computed to be 2.98 which signify agreed. The implication of this is that Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of fairness among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area.

Research Question Two: To what extent does Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of peaceful coexistence among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area?

Table 4: Contributions of Civic Education on the Awareness of the Democratic Value of Peaceful Coexistence among Secondary School Students

S/N	d	Sd	d	d	d	Sd	d	d	d	
			d	d	d	d	d	d	\bar{X}	
4	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p>
d	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p>	
di	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p>	
d	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p> <p>d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p> <p>d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p> <p>d d d d</p>	<p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p> <p>d</p>	
	d d						d d		d d	

Table 4 is on the contributions of Civic Education on the awareness of the democratic value of peace coexistence among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area. On a closer look at the table, one can discover that all the three items were rated agreed with mean scores of 3.49, 3.10, 3.22 and 3.22 respectively. The aggregate mean was computed to be 2.98 which signify agreed. Therefore, it can be implied that Civic Education

contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of fairness among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area.

Research Question Three: To what extent does Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of justice among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area?

Table 5: Contributions of Civic Education to the Awareness of the Democratic Value of Justice among Secondary School Students

S/N	d	Sd	d	d	d	Sd	d	d	\bar{X}	d
8	d d d d d d d d d d	d	8d d d d d	d d d d d	d d	d d d	ddd d dd	dd	d	
d	d d d d d d d d d d d d d		d d 8d	d d dd	dd d	d d	ddd d d d d	dd d	d	
di	d d d d d d d d d d d d d d d d		d d d d	d d d d d d	dd d d	d d d	ddd d d d d	dd d	d	
d	d d d d d d d d d d d d		d d d 8d	d d d d	dd d dd	dd d dd	ddd d d d d	dd 8	d	
	d						d d		d	

Table 5 is based on the contributions of Civic Education to the awareness of the democratic value of justice among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area. The table revealed that items 17-20 which have 3.54, 3.23, 3.26 and 3.08 were rated strongly agreed and agreed respectively because they are within the mean range of 2.50-3.49. Subsequently, the grand mean was computed to be 3.27 which signify agreed and can be

deduced that Civic Education contributed to the awareness of the democratic value of justice among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area.

Discussion

On the research question one, on the contributions of Civic Education on the awareness of the democratic value of fairness among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area, the students agreed Civic Education helps them to treat others with impartiality and with understanding of Civic Education the students carry out their civic responsibilities with fair-mindedness. Furthermore, the students agreed that Civic Education helps them to respect others feelings and human dignity (respecting others and being a good listener) and finally to develop the ability to participate thoughtfully and meaningfully in civic affairs. This agrees with Adeyemi (2018) who reported that the contents of civic education being taught in secondary schools were relevant. This means that themes such as national values treated in the senior secondary schools have impacted on students to appreciate the value of being fair in their dealings with classmates and other people that they may encounter in their course of life.

On the research question two which focused on the contributions of Civic Education to the awareness of the democratic value of peaceful coexistence among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area, the students agreed that Civic Education informs the students that peaceful coexistence as a democratic value is needed by them, teaches them peaceful coexistence amidst diversity in terms of ethnicity as Nigerians, to embrace peaceful coexistence regardless of religion practiced and cultural differences. Again, this finding reflects the research report of Schulz, Ainley, Cox and Friedman (2018) who observed that students with high level of civic knowledge and engagement are predisposed to peaceful co-existence through the use of dialogue and negotiation than the use of violence to achieving peace compared to those students with low level of civic knowledge.

Finally, research question three on the contributions of Civic Education to the awareness of the democratic value of justice

among secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area, the students agreed that civic education teaches them to avoid deception and falsehood to gain access into elective offices and the injustice destroys good democratic virtue. The finding of this study is in line with findings of Omotoso, Fademi and Popoola (2017); where they found that Civic Education had significant social influence on Senior Secondary school students, the society and Nigeria at large.

Conclusion

From the results and discussions made, it can be concluded that the teaching and learning of Civic Education in schools in Nigeria has to a large extent contributed to the awareness of democratic values. This in turn has increased the level of civic knowledge and dispositions among secondary school students especially in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. In other words, the more students are exposed to an effective teaching and learning of Civic Education, the more they will not only be disposed to live peacefully with others but will also be just and fair in dealing with others as they grow to full adulthood.

Recommendations

On this basis therefore, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Well prepared and stable Civic Education curriculum should be designed for every level of the Nigerian school programme. There is an urgent need for the Nigerian government to develop relevant and functional civic education curriculum for the various educational levels in the country.
- ii. Civic Education should be the central goal of the Nigerian educational system. Civic Education should be given the right priority in Nigeria. Acquisition and demonstration of civic values and skills should be the main theme of the Nigerian school programme. This is because the prosperity of a country does not depend on the strength of its fortification or revenue but rather, on the number of responsible citizens and men of character.

- iii. Teacher education programme should be developed for Civic Education such that Civic educators and teachers are properly trained to develop the civic knowledge and values that they are expected to teach.
- iv. Participatory approach should be adopted in teaching civic concepts. Our students need active participatory approach for effective civic engagement. At the classroom level, students must be given opportunities to be involved in developing rules, functioning as group members, taking up responsibilities and managing their own affairs.
- v. Grass-root and community based informal civic training should be undertaken all over Nigeria. Patriotic Clubs can be introduced in Nigerian communities to enhance group participatory and community based informal civic training programme.

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