
EFFECTIVENESS OF CIVIC INSTRUCTIONS: KEY TO
SUSTAINING DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

A nation with most of its citizens lacking in participatory skills with poor social values will have citizens' actions hindering the flourishing and sustenance of democratic structures. The paper aims to examine the effectiveness of civic instructions to see how the younger generations are being prepared for democracy in Nigeria. Also, the study provides an answer on the extent to which social/character education is inbuilt into the civic curriculum as well as the teachers' awareness of concepts focusing on the democratic culture of the citizens. Teachers' instructional approach to civics was captured through qualitative and quantitative methods involving questionnaires, checklist, observation of civic curriculum document and a semi-structured interview. Ten teachers from four different randomly selected senior secondary schools were sampled. Analyses of data were through simple coding, percentage and mean score. The results showed that teachers have a high awareness of the civic curriculum contents with very impressive evidence of character education inclusion in the curriculum but civic instructions and civic preparatory

skills depicted low approaches that do not provide the opportunity for engagement in public life for students' learning. The recommendation was given to enhance the use of multiple strategies and inclusion of participatory skills into civic instructions as teachers' delivers the curriculum.

Keywords: Civic instruction, Effective Instructions and Democratic structures

Introduction

The continuous breakdown of law and order failed leadership and passive followership portrayed by low turnout during elections, coupled with weak responses to critical issues that demanded national attentions altogether point at inadequate support for the democratic structures or pillars that would sustain democracy in Nigeria. Schools with low-quality procedures of preparing students' for lifelong skills and participation in the society will also hinder the ability to support true democratic practices. The 21st-century teaching and learning skills demand a great deal of work from schools to produce students who have high civic competencies founded in collaboration, team spirit, ability to organize and interpret information well towards the common good of the community. Various factors are influencing the perceptions and activities of people, including democratic institutions in societies. Little wonder then that the goal of Civic education curriculum was designed to meet with the overall goal of schooling: a "desire to bring the reality of everyday societal living to the students' at their age of critical thinking and reasoning about events happening around them" and this can be achieved through helping the students "to acquire knowledge, basic skills and attitudes, values that will help them become responsible and disciplined members of the societies" (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), 2009). Building stable democratic structures in Nigeria has become a difficult task. Significant threats face the continuous support of democratic institutions due to loss of faith even in the judiciary, electoral processes including the media which

ought to serve as the hope of the common man. Conflict of various kinds ranging from political, communal, religious, to economic and social crises permeates our societies. The overarching terrorism, banditry, corruption, rape, alcohol and drug abuse, gangsterism, with abuse of office by government agents and lack of proper organization by the youths to stir up changes for democratic practices in Nigeria are unlimited issues of concerns, according to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2019). It also bothers on how Nigeria as a nation is consciously preparing the younger generations for active, meaningful participation in the democratic life. It is therefore not enough to have students' trained in mere regurgitation of facts and figures of knowledge in democracy, instead, students' must actively be prepared in simple democratic related activities now to guarantee their future engagement in public life. It is in this hope of sustaining democratic structures that this paper intends to examine the effectiveness of civic education instructions toward building capacity in students and social skills to make demands and contributes meaningfully to democratic institutions in the country. The National Academy of Science -NAS (2012) described curriculum instruction has to be a means of engaging the students' in various learning activities which are designed purposefully to motivate learners. Curriculum instructions in any subject should make students' to focus on central concepts and significant principles of the discipline/subject while developing strategies (skills) for problem-solving favoured by that discipline. Defining the term instruction is more dynamic as the word curriculum itself. Random (2016) cited by Flake (2017) expressed the original meaning of instruction as being "to provide structure and direction". Instruction, therefore, summarizes the practices in education. Flake (2017) citing Wiles, defined "instruction" as "how the curriculum is delivered" while curriculum itself refers to "what is taught in schools".

Civic education instructions, therefore, mean civics implementation in the school. Civic education herein represents a deliberate program of instructions within schools to mould young people into acceptable societal values and the democratic system

as practised by the society (Odunmbaku, Suleiman, Akinfenwa, Akhagba & Doki, 2014). Civic instructions can be inferred from the preceding to mean “how the teacher in the classroom delivers civic curricular content”.

A significant characteristic of any curriculum instructions is that it promotes a deep understanding of students, put emphasis on teachers’ as facilitators of students’ active learning through enquiry and combining learning strategies with the promotion of collaboration. Proper curriculum instructions should involve multiple methods of education for flexibility of learning experiences through giving off enough time, space, feedback and guidance for learning. These will integrate metacognition, a condition promoting critical thinking into curriculum instruction (Gainous & Martens, 2012).

Civic education is an established part of Social Studies, both in America and in Nigeria, it was clearly stated in the NEDRC curriculum for Civic education that significant contents of Civic Education were developed from existing Social Studies curriculum (NCSS, 2013; NERDC, 2009). The EricDigest (2018) citing Hoge (1998) stated that the civic skills include decision-making skills on public issues and participation in public affairs. Civics goal enhances education in self-government with citizens’ active involvement in their governance based on working knowledge of processes, critical thinking and acceptance of rights and responsibilities in the society. The NCSS (2013) stated that the academic potential that will make democracy to work in students would require character education. NAS (2019) opined that the standard contents of any curriculum (civic education) are not just a list of essential topics and skills but more of a “vision of what should be visible in its content priority and emphasis” which guides the curriculum instructions. It is because education will only bring about a desirable change when there is a change in both the content and instructional methods that teachers’ use to deliver the instructions. Pahel (2012) stated that building democratic values into the youth through Civic Education is the best way to raise responsible citizens.

According to the framework of Living Democracy (2015), by the Zurich University of Teacher Education, titled “The Conceptual Framework of the Manual: Key Concepts”. Concept-based framework for learning promotes a constructive, didactic (lecture) approach to the teaching of civic education by focusing on concepts as useful tools of learning to encourage learners understanding. Ideas provide cognitive structures that allow the students’ to infuse new information into a meaningful context and to remember information easily and to promote learning by the heart (constructive approach to learning). Concepts are essential in raising informed citizens too because they enhance understanding when the thoughts are used often, which could be applied to a new context. This framework for Civic education curriculum (contents) is designed in concentric circles which centre around democracy emphasizing on participation by active citizens. Interdependent elements (rights, responsibilities and justice) for democracy to succeed are often discussed around issues. Civic education content is interwoven around government, law, citizenship with suggested concepts including government, the rule of law, Media, rights; conflicts, diversity and pluralism, equality and responsibility (Hoge, 2018; Education Commission of the States, 2014). This study, therefore, adopts the key concept map with the idea that the content of any curriculum does have implications on its instructions (ECS, 2014; NAS, 2019).

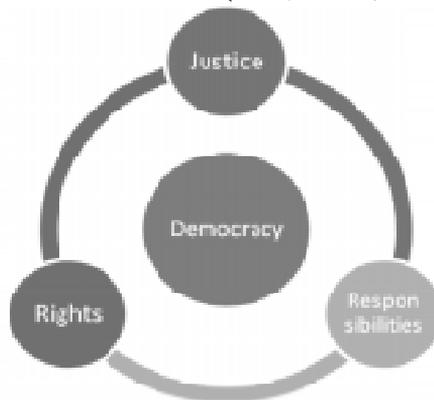


Figure 1. Civic Education Framework
Source: Adapted from Living Democracy (2015)

From the preceding, the instructions received through Civic education will enable the learners to become active, participating members of their society whose contributions would support the structures of democracy in place for the nation. The compositions on which democracy rest to thrive include press freedom (promotes free flow of information and serving as watch-dog on the society), respect for or supremacy of the constitution, strong institutions of government running on basis of power-sharing, well-equipped armed forces; active civil society organization, transparency (open and responsive leadership), multiple political parties system, and sovereignty (recognition of democratic authority being vested in the people) as described by Odunmbaku et al. (2014). These are anchors that sustain democratic structures, also known as principles that make democracy work, and a thriving democracy requires good habits or social skills to drive their operations. The Civic Mission according to the NCSS (2013) stated that a competent and responsible citizen in any democratic society should manifest four common traits including (a) having essential information about democratic processes and thoughtful to dialogue with others whose opinions may differ (b) develop capacity to participate in civil society groups to solve community problems (c) having skills to act politically especially being able to speak in public to influence decision-making process and (d) socially responsible having concerns for the rights and welfare of other people, and ability to reach a compromise between personal interest and the common good of all.

Effective instruction, according to Great School Partnership (2019), can be “defined as teacher’s behaviours and practices which enhance the learning of all students”. The teacher refrains from one-size-fits-all approach while emphasizing how well the students’ achieve the curriculum learning goals. Flake (2017) described adequate instructions as demanding a teacher to be knowledgeable and skillfully experienced to teach effectively. Having adequate knowledge of the subject is regarded as a science while teachers’ ability to use several approaches to teach is what defines teaching as an art. The ability to do this well will result in practical instructions. Although learning concepts and facts about

the government is a significant part of Civic Education goal, promoting understanding of how the processes of democracy work and how to take part in these processes make a broad goal of effective civic education. Torney-Purta (2005), therefore opined that it is important to explore teachers' knowledge and beliefs because these affect how teachers' relate to students' civic instructions. Having an effective Civic education in schools is the primary tool for teaching and learning the democratic values which guide citizens' freedom, orderliness, and active participation in public life (EricDigest, 2018).

Describing the components or elements of useful instructions, the Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD) (2019), adopted the IOWA Core START characteristics of effective education which includes (a) Student-centered classroom (b) Teaching for understanding (c) Assessment for learning (d) Rigor and relevance and (e) Teaching for Learner differences. Teacher's role is that of a facilitator, promoting deep conceptual and procedural knowledge with higher-order thinking (HOT) for application in a new context. The Great School Partnership (2019) described its framework anchoring on students' engagement for effective instruction as containing elements such as (1) safe learning environment (2) clear, shared outcomes between teachers and students guiding instructional activities (3) varied content, materials and methods of instruction (4) feedback and practices and (5) complex thinking and transfer. Common ground in the effectiveness of instruction is the need for a higher order of thinking and use of knowledge gained skilfully in a new situation.

Effective civic instruction promotes lifelong learning whereby individuals are encouraged and supported in taking responsibilities for their knowledge and continue learning throughout their lives in all areas; developing in learners the study skills, self-motivation, progress monitoring and independent knowledge (Facilitating Learning, 2019). According to Owen (2015), citing ECS (2014) and the NCSS (2015) discussed the acceptable practices that indicate effectiveness or high-quality delivery of civic instructions to achieve citizenship education goal. These six proven practices in civics are: Classroom Instructions: This is direct instruction given in class

covering topics on government, law, history, economics, democracy, et cetera. Contents of the curriculum show the breadth and depth of valuable knowledge students' are to learn (NAS, 2019). Having more excellent civic knowledge presented in ways that provoke analysis and critical thinking skills will make learners' to understand democratic processes by providing a foundation for civic learning. However, using rote learning method during delivery of instruction that is based on mere facts, regurgitation should be discouraged as it kills interest in learning, making the knowledge un-useful in a new context. Though Civic education instructions favour the use of academic, lecture method, effective teachers' use wider, multiple ranges of modalities to promote learning through different styles, emphasize critical concepts and make classroom interactive. The didactic strategy should, therefore, be constructive (Aargard, 2015).

Discussion of Current Events: having a civil dialogue in the class including controversial issues being discussed among the students and teachers in groups both with happenings in the communities makes the instruction to be exciting, participatory and enhance the transfer of knowledge to applicable events beyond the theory in the class. Telling stories during dialogues provides room for learning with the heart while indirectly students' practised healthy social skills compromise, et cetera.

Service Learning: effective civic instruction should be one that gives relevant and motivating opportunities for students to link classroom instructions with real-life democratic principles and processes. When students engage in group projects to solve community or school problems, they gain first-hand experiences making abstract topics more meaningful, with practising, what is learned is more helpful in repeating such steps in future.

Co-curricular activities: opportunities for getting involved with others both within and outside the school are a forum developing the real civic skills learnt. Joining students' society groups promotes interaction among people with diverse opinions and natures as well as unity various persons to work together for the good of all. **Simulation of Democratic Processes:** engaging in role-playing and mock democratic activities such as voting, campaigning, and acting

as law enforcement agents, legislative deliberation, giving a speech at a protest march, et cetera spurs common interest and clarity of social issues in multiple perspectives preparing them for active participation in democracy.

School Governance: when students' receive instructions in Civic education with the opportunity to be part of students' leadership, governing body or serve as a school prefect, class representative, dormitory leader, and so on provides a platform for real thinking, negotiation of ideas, speaking and resolving conflicts.

Character, from the above, can be seen as a pillar that upholds the structures of democracy. Because of this, knowledge alone is not enough to make a useful citizen but together with civic virtues also known as social skills, the character counts in sustaining structures that make democracy to work. The Josephson Institute selected six figures while the Center for Civic Education listed ten characteristics that enhance citizens' capacity to work with others in making a difference in society and to sustain democracy. These characters are related and synchronized as follows: trustworthiness/honesty, respect/civility, fairness/open-mindedness, individual responsibility; caring/generosity, patience/persistence, tolerance and citizenship/loyalty. Although the goal of civic education, on the one hand, according to Wayne Ross (2017) quoting Marker & Mehlinger (1992) is to contribute to the values vital to democratic citizenship, but research works pointed out that teaching of benefits did not prominently reflect in the planning and practice of many Social Studies teachers.

Furthermore, participation in public life especially, in a democratic society demands skills. Civic skills are those capacities relating to citizenship, that is, skills of one's membership of a country. Comber (2005), describes civic skills like the abilities to communicate, organize, understand; participate and think critically to influences policies in political life. Whitacre (2014) expressed the civic skills as personal communication skills, knowledge of the political system, critical thinking ability, and concern for rights of other such as respect, tolerance, and belief in one's capacity to make a difference. According to Whitacre (2014), civic skills are tools for active participation in a democratic society. A responsible

citizen is expected, therefore to differentiate facts from mere opinions. For instance, points are statements that can be proven to be true, while opinions are statements of judgment and self ideas. Civic skills will enable the students' to reason deeply to avoid bias and prejudice and to gather information from various sources for decision making. Civic skills examined in this study include proficient use of English language for communication, writing a letter to communicate with leaders, giving a speech in public; making interpretations of political materials, monitoring sources of news and engaging in a group discussion on events happening around them (Comber,2005). Civic skills can be either intellectual or participatory skills. The civic, mental skills are for analyzing issues requiring understanding of significant concepts while the civic participatory skills are demanded practical involvement in the democratic process such as interacting through communication and cooperation; monitoring such as following up on happenings around and influencing which is about having capacity to produce changes in the community (Carmine, Fritz & Horst, 2003). This study thus examined the civic participatory skills imparted to students.

Knowledge and beliefs of teachers' on civic education varied across schools and classrooms, resulting in different approaches in the delivery of instructions. The fact that Civic education favours the use of academic (lecture) method has made many teachers to hinder students activeness and participation during instruction delivery which altogether puts only head knowledge in students, deprived them of skills and real habits required for active engagement to sustain democracy. This paper examines how practical the civic instructions received in secondary school is towards promoting students' support for democratic structures.

Purpose of the Study

This paper examined the effectiveness of civic education instructions at strengthening democratic structures through the content, skills and participation students gained or competencies achieved during the civic lessons. Specifically, the research objectives are to:

1. Examine the teacher's awareness of Civic Education curriculum content;
2. Find out basic character education gained through Civic Education;
3. Determine the extent to which democratic skills in Civic Education enhances the capacity for participation in public life;
4. Investigate the area to which the teacher incorporates useful instructions into Civic Education lessons.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are teachers' aware of the curriculum content in Civic Education?
2. What are the primary character education students' gained in Civic Education?
3. What extent of democratic capacity-building skills is inherent in Civic Education?
4. To what extent does a Civic Education teacher employ practical instructions in the lessons?

Methodology

This study on the effectiveness of civics instructions adopted descriptive survey design employing mixed methods of data collection, through defining what to measure and how it was measured. According to Taghreed and Fakhri (2014) citing Creswell (2014), stated that a mixed-method approach is valuable to ensure an in-depth understanding of issues being studied. The study population refers to all senior secondary school and Civic Education teachers within public schools in Alimosho Local Government Area, Lagos State; while the target population was Civic Education teachers' in secondary schools within Agbado Oke-Odo, Lagos; (Local Development Council Area under Alimosho Local Government Area). The study sample size was selected teachers mainly in the senior school of Command Secondary School, Lagos; Lagos State Senior Model College, Meiran, Lagos, and two other schools in a suburb area of the LCDA. The study used a random

sampling through a probability sampling technique for selection of schools studied while the main sample population for the study was based on non-probability method, making the sample size a purposive sampling type. Four (4) civic education teachers' from (CSSL); two teachers each from three Lagos state schools (6), making a total of ten teachers and four (4) S.S.3 students' (one from each school to triangulate data from the teachers') formed the respondents. Data collected was through the quantitative instrument (questionnaire) and qualitative instruments (semi-structured interviews and guided checklist observation of documents based on stated variables in the study such as civics curriculum content, teachers' lesson plan and students' Civic Notes).

Two questionnaires forms constructed by researchers' addressing the same variables but differently framed for teachers and students were applied for data gathering. Teacher's questionnaire titled Effective Civic Instruction for Democracy-Teacher's View (ECID-TV) was divided into three segments. Section A covered respondents Bio-Data, Section B included items on teacher's knowledge awareness of the civic education curriculum contents while Section C items included variables on democratic-building capacity skills in civics and the actual practice of civic instructions employed by the teacher to engage students' in learning. The students' questionnaire titled Effective Civic Instruction for Democracy-Students' View (ECID-SV) was divided into three sections following similar variables but items differently framed to the cognitive level of students'. Options for responses were placed on a 4-point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Agreed to Strongly Disagreed with options for Section C varying from Very Often to Never. The interview sessions were carried out using a voice recording device as well as direct checklist used for civics standard documents to guide instructions and contents marked as either Present or Not Present by the researchers.

The questionnaire items were validated through content and face validity processes guided by experts advice in Social studies field. The content validity was arrived at from the review of related literature on Civic Inventories (Comber, 2005). The reliability of

the instrument anchored on internal consistency ensured during the administration procedure of questionnaires.

Also, for data collection, formal approval was granted by the Vice-Principal (Academics) Senior School while teachers' interest was gained through an efficient approach in administering the questionnaire. The interview was carried out the same day with the survey for both teachers' and students' all within a space of three hours (2hr) in each school. Furthermore, a copy of the Civic Standard Curriculum was checked through including the teachers' and the students' notes guided by specific adopted checklist. Data analysis was done on a simple percentage, and average means score, on a 4-point Likert scale with the decision-making rating scale by McLeod (2008). Primary data (interview, check listed-contents) were presented in a rich narrative format (through theme highlights) during the discussion of findings.

Results

The tables below reveal the results of the descriptive analysis of data collected to provide explanations to the research questions.

Table 1: Teachers' Opinion on Content Awareness, Skills and Effective Instructions in Civic Education

Number	Research Question	Mean (x)	Decision Making	Percentage
RQ1	To what extent are teachers' aware of the curriculum content in civic education?	3.55	High	71%
RQ3	What is the extent of democratic capacity-building skills inherent in civic education?	2.4	Low	48%
RQ4	To what extent does a Civic education teacher employ effective instructions in the lessons?	2.47	Low	49.4%

Table 1 shows teachers' responses to the research question 1 on awareness of Civic Education curriculum contents. This turned out with a high mean score of 3.55 (71%) with evidence of qualitative observation check on the curriculum too, indicating the materials were built around concepts of government, law and order, Historical and geographical facts, et cetera. These concepts are in tandem with NCSS (2013), Living Democracy (2014) and suggested high-quality topical areas for Civic Education. Examples of ideas contained in Civic curriculum are Representative democracy; Pillars of Democracy, Human Rights, Democracy and National Development, Popular Participation, Civil Society, Rule of Law, Traffic Regulations to mention a few. Meanwhile, the qualitative check on the Civic Education curriculum by NERDC (2009), revealed the following contents/concepts as topics to be taught by teachers:

Table 2: Civic Education Curriculum Content for the Senior Secondary Class

CLASS	THEMES
SS 1	Our Values, Emerging Issues, Citizenship, representative democracy, pillars of Democracy, Human Rights, cultism and Law and Order
SS 2	Citizenship, Democracy and National Development, Dangers of political apathy, Achieving Popular Participation in politics, Limitation of Human Rights, Drugs and Drug Abuse, Responsible parenthood, Traffic regulations and Relationships
SS 3	Characteristics of Human Rights, Dangers of Political apathy, Public Service in a Democracy, Civil Society and popular participation, Constitutional Democracy and the Rule of Law, and Human Trafficking.

Source: NERDC Civic Education Curriculum (2009)

In the preface statement of the NERDC Civic Curriculum, the developers clearly stated at the sixth paragraph that “teachers are encouraged to enrich the contents with relevant materials and information from their immediate environment” (NERDC, 2009). Also, the developers have the right intent alongside the world best practices for Civic Education, as shown in the curriculum formal objectives at the introduction page, stating that Civic Education is to:

1. Promote the understanding of the inter-relationship between man/woman, the government and the society;
2. Highlight the structure of government, its functions and the responsibilities of government to the people and vice-versa;
3. Enhance the teaching and learning of the emerging issues;
4. Inculcate in students their duties and obligations to society.

Also, Table 1 showed responses to research question 3 on the extent to which capacity for democratic skills was built into the students’ through Civic instructions. The mean score was 2.4 (48%) rated on decision table as low; an indication that students’ taking civic instructions are often not given enough opportunities to develop excellent skills that Civic education is meant to provide as shown in the curriculum objectives 3 and 4 (NERDC, 2009). These lifelong skills which according to Comber (2005) includes communication in the official language, writing of the formal letter, speaking up in public to influence decisions, reading through articles on newspapers and discussing happenings on politics and social life with others.

Table 1 furthermore highlighted the response to research question 3, which is basically on how teachers’ carry out their Civic education instruction in the classroom either effectively or not. The civics instructions were rated low with a mean result of 2.47 (49.4%); an indication that teachers’ do not often use methods of instructions that could engage the students to practice with the Civic lessons. The interview section portrayed the teachers’ style as including storytelling but usually not initiated by the students while areas of controversial issues around politics, religion, tribes and gender issues (emerging issues) are often dominated by

teacher's opinion rather than views of the students with room for clarifications of values as students' participate in building up courage of speaking in the public.

Table 3: Teacher Perception on Character Education in Civics Curriculum

Number	Question	Present 100%	Not Present 00%
RQ2	What are the basic character education students' gained in Civic education?		
	Honesty, Discipline, caring, Responsibility, Fairness (Tolerance); and Loyalty/ Citizenship	100	–
	Patience and Persistence	87.5	12.5
	Civility/Respect	75	25

Table 3: shows results for research question 2, which was presented in a simple option format of either Present or Not Present to indicate character education or social skills students gained in Civic education. Out of the eight (8) adopted habits/character promoted by the NCSS (2013); teachers' unanimously with 100% agreement that Civic Education contained social skills that enhance the attitudes of students. However, only 75% agreed on the inclusion of Civility/Respect while 25% disagreed, stating this character is not present in the curriculum. Furthermore, the civic virtue of Patience/Persistence was opposed upon; while 87.5% agreed that this virtue is inclusive in Civic Education Curriculum to be promoted in learners, there is 12.5% disagreement on characters of patience/persistence that is, not present in civic education. The triangulation done through a checklist carried out on Civic Education curriculum indicated the following topics of the heart are inclusive such as our values Justice, selflessness, honesty, community service; citizenship, responsible parenthood, Relationships, et cetera (NERDC, 2009).

Discussion

The decision making scale was based on McLeod (2008) Likert rating. The findings discussed herein emanated from this study data as follows:

The Civic education curriculum contents as observed in the studied schools followed the concentric, concept-based framework on Civic education proposed by the Living Democracy as well as including most basic topics considered acceptable by the world body on Social Studies, the NCSS and which reflected in the Nigerian Civic education curriculum (NERDC, 2009; NCSS, 2013; Living Democracy, 2015).

There is also substantial evidence from the qualitative analysis as regards the intentional promotion of social skills or character education in Civic education curriculum for Nigerian students right from the junior secondary classes (Basic 7-9) all through to the senior secondary levels as proven by the curriculum content of Civic Education authored by NERDC (NERDC, 2009).

However, despite the inclusions of both knowledge contents and character education topics in Civic education curriculum; there is a low level of civic skills imparted to the students implying that students of civic instructions lack the abilities and “technical know-how” of involving or engaging in the public processes of influencing democratic decisions.

The delivery of civics instructions is also found to be challenged or troubled as teachers’ engaged mostly in the traditional, didactic (lecture) method of teaching, often neglecting the constructivism paradigm to didactic method which would enable the students’ to own the knowledge and practically be involved in the lessons rather than the teacher-centred practice of instructions being seen currently among the observed schools. The observed phenomenon was related to the description made of teachers by Navaneedhan that teachers were too dependent on the lecture method, use of textbooks, questioning technique and teacher-centred approaches to instructions often (Navaneedhan, 2012).

Teachers’ partly complained of issues with inadequate number of periods allotted to Civic education. Some stated it was just one and half hour (3 Periods of 30-35 minutes each) a week,

and the time frame for class commencement can be frustrating especially immediately towards lunch break and closing time when students' become more restless, tired and inattentive in the class. This unfortunate attitude towards Civic education is not unconnected with the erroneous opinion many teachers, school management and parents project on Civic education as invaluable and a mere by-pass subject due to its non-requirement status for admission into Universities and other institutions of higher learning in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The data analysis and interpretations indicated that in line with the six proven, acceptable practices that promote sufficient Civic education instructions which are: classroom instructions, discussion of current events and controversial issues; service-learning, co-curricular activities, involvement in school governance and simulation of democratic processes; the observed patterns in Civic education formal curriculum and instructions showed that only classroom instructions (contents) and discussions of current events are presently in practice through civic instructions while other methods expected are either not being done or inadequately utilized (ECS, 2014; NCSS, 2013). The interview sessions revealed teachers' high workload, especially in all sampled Lagos state schools as only two teachers were posted to teach civics irrespective of the students' very high population. A typical teacher has nothing less than two different arms with about 400 average number of students to handle, very crowded classrooms to the point of hindering the free movement of teacher and students' for interactivity during delivery of instructions. Thus, civic instructions can be rated as low, judged not too active and of low quality as delivered by teachers because less than one-third of the recommended effective practices are being carried out. This is not because the curriculum was poorly designed but rather due to the lack of many proven opportunities that can build students capacities and experiences required for sustaining structures of democracy. According to Aagaard (2015), active learning not only motivates but should promotes interactivity, address previous beliefs and

empower learners with a framework for thinking and doing something; and it is this framework for thinking and doing that is missing in current Civics instruction.

Recommendations

The following recommendations based on the findings are suggested to enhance civics instructions towards sustaining stable democratic structures.

1. Organising workshops for teachers of Civic education can be used to promote the use of constructive lecture method with multiple approaches which will enhance the process of civic instructions in the classroom.
2. Adequate support should be given by the school leadership and co-teachers in placing lifelong values on Civic education rather than limiting it to mere academic competition with other school subjects.
3. Need for increasing time allocation and number of periods given to civics instructions on the school timetabling to provide adequate time for teachers to engage students in practical activities that will enable them to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for sustaining democratic society in Nigeria.

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