



Impact of Gender and School Location on Correlate of Political Education Knowledge in Civic Education and Attitude to Political Participation

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Abstract. This study looked into how students' attitudes toward political engagement in Edo State and their knowledge of political education concepts in civic education were correlated with their gender and the location of their school. The need for a true and unadulterated democratic process, a solid education that fosters critical and analytical thinking, and responsible and effective citizen engagement became essential for both meaningful development and good governance. There were three hypotheses developed to direct the investigation. For this investigation, a descriptive survey design was used. Using the multi-stage sampling technique, 840 students were selected among 74,440 public Junior Secondary School I-III students in the Edo South Senatorial District. The Knowledge of Political Education Test, an achievement test, and the Students' Attitude to Political Participation Likert scale, which was intended to gather data from respondents, were the two tools utilized in the study. For the hypotheses, data was gathered and analyzed using Pearson's "r" at the 0.05 level of significance. The study's conclusions showed a strong correlation between students' attitudes on voting, voter registration drives, the rule of law, and the electoral process and political education. It also showed that there are no appreciable differences between gender and school location in terms of students' attitudes toward political engagement and their understanding of political education concepts. The study recommends amongst others that Civic Education curriculum contents be enhanced to accommodate more of political education concepts.

Keywords: Gender, School Location, Political Education Knowledge, Civil Education, Attitude, Political Participation

1. Introduction

The general belief that education remains a vital instrument for transmitting knowledge, values and attitude in the society is not at all in doubt. A nation's educational system is essential in fostering the information, attitudes, and values that influence people's political behavior and, ultimately, their level of social engagement. Formal schools/education were created to select the worthwhile aspects of the culture of society for propagation and to make children develop national and universal values and character that will shapen the ones they cultivated from homes (Aimiyekagbon 1018). Education is considered a crucial agent of democracy, as it fosters critical and analytical thinking, essential for the realization of a genuine democratic process. The ultimate aim is to suggest how education is used for translating the national political theory into an actuality (Amachj, Innocent & Ikechukwu, 2018). Education enables citizens to know how their society functions and their roles in it. It helps citizens to know the system of government operated by his society, how it is structured, the dos and dons of its operation and the rights and responsibilities of citizens in the system. Above all, the knowledge or information to participate by citizens in democracy is transmitted through education. The relationships between the school authorities and student, the pattern of relations among the students themselves, the content of civic courses and the general organization and administration of the school system all play significant roles in implanting or inhibiting certain attitudes and dispositions of people towards politics (Dowse and Hughes 1992).

In order to foster knowledge, values, and behavioral orientation in students for the benefit and

sustainability of society, Osakwe (as cited in Ekuri, Betiang & Andong 2014) highlights the importance of political education. This infers that political education is a set of practices and activities geared towards making people better equipped to participate actively in democratic life, by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in society (Ekuri, Betiang & Andong 2014). Political education principally performs the function of engendering political awareness within a society through the preparation of the people for the socio-political world in which they live (Ekuri, Betiang & Andong 2014). They should be able to exploit this to their advantage and make a substantial contribution to the advancement of their nation.

The governed can provide the essential input into the governmental process through political involvement. It provides the citizenry with the opportunity to have a say in the determination of societal affairs while at the same time, making the political leadership responsible to his followers in the conduct of governmental affairs (Peil 1976 in Ejere 1998). Therefore, Yesufu (as cited in Uzamere 2018) contend, among other things, that political education should focus on helping people comprehend, regulate, change, and restructure the human environment in all of its forms in order to improve their quality of life. Another definition of political participation is the process by which citizens of a nation participate in determining the fundamental questions of what the community's objectives are and how best to pursue them. Different people and nations participate in politics to different degrees, and political education plays a major role in this.

2. Political Education, Participation and Gender

Women constitute more than half of the world population, their contribution to the social and economic development of society is also more than half as compared to that of men by virtue of their dual roles in the productive and reproduction spheres; yet their participation in formal political structures and processes, where decisions regarding the use of resources generated by both men and women around the world is 18% (International Women's Center, 2008 in Yetunde, 2011). Also that, there is rising interest in women running for office on both the national and international levels. This is especially true now that it is understood that making contributions to a country's growth does not violate gender equality.

Women have participated in politics to varied degrees throughout Nigeria's history. Although women's

political participation in pre-colonial Nigerian civilizations lagged behind that of men, their roles in traditional administration were complementary rather than submissive. Studies have revealed that before colonialism began in 1900, certain remarkable women like Queen Daura of Daura Emirate, Queen Amina of Zazzay, Emotan of Benin Kingdom held powerful positions in the administration of their individual kingdoms, empires, and emirates (Gberevbie and Oviasogie 2013 in Uzamere, 2018). However, colonialism brought in the marginalization of women's political engagement in Nigeria. According to Erunke and Shaibu (2013) in Uzamere (2018), the beginning of colonialism in Nigeria is frequently linked to gender prejudice in Nigeria's political system. This was made clear in the Sir Hugh Clifford constitution of 1922, which brought the electoral element to Nigerian politics in the early stage of colonialism. As a result, women lost their rights and only wealthy adult males were allowed to participate. According to Oni and Shegun (2012), these behaviours characterized the politicization of men and the exclusion of women from the political mainstream in Nigeria. In contemporary Nigeria, notable women who had played significant roles in the political affairs of Nigeria includes Dora Akuniyi, Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, Oby Ezekwesili, just to mention a few.

In terms of political education and participation in contemporary Nigeria, no much disparity can be observed as to how male and female learn political education concepts but some disparities do exist in the way they involve and participate in political activities. Though there is consensus amongst scholars and researchers on the fact that gender is a factor that affect academic performance of students (Akpekpe & Ejere, 2001; Folade & Orugbemi 2010; Gutmann, 2012). There is no consensus as to which of the gender group performs better. On the contrary, researches have shown that male folks participate more in politics than the female folks (Falade, 2014; Olanlere, 2015; Oladejo & Oni 2017).

Political education, participation and location

People's participation in local matters, according to Omoruyi (2010), is merely an indication of their confidence in their own abilities. Hence, the willingness and ability of the local dwellers to participate and contribute meaningfully to the democratic process of their community is a function of the knowledge, orientation, awareness and information provided to participate in the act of governance. In support of this opinion, Idada and Uhumwuangho (2012), stated that the local dwellers are core and fundamental for the development of any meaningful democracy, as the existence of their socio-

economic equality and right in the society is an essential condition for the successful functioning of democracy.

Ojajorotu (2009) stated that, ultimate power is located with the rural as well as urban dwellers who are eligible to vote in the sense that those entrusted with responsibility of governance should be answerable to the electorate and being answerable provides opportunity for electorate to access their stewardship, for the purpose of reward and punishment, as both reward and punishment can be manifested in regime change through free and fair elections. Therefore, guaranteeing a sustainable democracy means educating the local dwellers which gives them such power to determine good governance and credible leaders, enable them to exercise their civic rights, resist anti-political actions and respect for the rule of law.

According to Akpan (2001), one aspect that influences students' academic success is their school's location, which inevitably affects how they study political education concepts. According to studies conducted over the past 20 years, adolescents who attend school in rural areas have lower educational aspirations than their urban counterparts (Haas, 1992; Stern, 1994; Kompits, 1996; Khattri, Riley, and Kane, 1997; Kannapel and De Young, 1999; Hu, 2003; Arnold et al., 2005 in Uzamere, 2018). There seems to be consensus among researchers that school location affects students' academic achievement. One is not certain what the contribution of this study would be in terms of achievement and participation based on political education concepts learnt and internalized?

Despite the political education put in place in Nigeria through the school system, there is general apathy to participation among many citizens of Edo state. Even among those who participate, their participation leave room for doubt and questions. This study therefore seeks to investigate among Junior Secondary School I-III Students of Edo South Senatorial district the relationship between political education knowledge and participation in terms of gender and school location.

The following hypotheses were developed to direct the research:

- The knowledge of political education will not significantly correlate the attitude of students towards political participation indices (voter's registration, voting exercise, rule of law and electoral process).
- There is no significant difference in the relationship of Secondary Students'

knowledge of political education concepts in Civic Education and their attitude to political participation due to gender.

- There is no significant difference in the relationship of Secondary Students' knowledge of political education concepts in Civic Education and attitude to political participation due to school location.

3. Research Methodology

To carry out the study, three hypotheses in total were developed. The investigation was conducted using a survey research approach. The population of the study consists of all JSS I–III pupils enrolled in the public junior secondary schools in the Edo South Senatorial District of the state. The senatorial district is composed of seven (7) local government districts and has a total of 138 public junior secondary schools. There are 74,440 students in the Senatorial District as a whole. A total of 840 pupils made up the study's sample size. The multi-stage approach was used to obtain this. First, four local government areas were chosen at random from the seven that already existed in the Senatorial District, using the simple random selection procedure. Secondly, a simple random selection technique was used to select seven junior secondary schools from each of the four local government areas that were sampled, for a total of 28 junior secondary schools selected from the Senatorial District. In each of the 28 junior secondary schools that were sampled, the stratified sampling technique was utilized to stratify by sex. Thereafter, a simple random sampling technique was used to select five (5) males and five (5) females in JS I-III from all the 28 sampled junior secondary schools and thereby making a total of 420 males and 420 female students that was used for the study. These added up gave the total of 840 students utilized for the study.

The instruments that were used for the study were of two types. To test hypothesis 1, an achievement test was developed and titled, "Knowledge of Political Education Test (KPET)". The purpose of giving it to the students was to evaluate their understanding of the subjects covered in the Civic Education curriculum related to political education. Also, to test hypothesis 1, 2 and 3, a Likert type of scale instrument was developed and titled, "Political Education Concepts in Civic Education Curriculum on Students' Attitude to Political participation". There were two (2) sections on the questionnaire: A and B. The respondent's personal information is provided in section 'A' of the questionnaire, while section B contains structured attitude scale items intended to assess the hypotheses proposed and raised for the study. The questionnaire

has thirty (30) items. Pearson Product Moment correlation statistics were used to evaluate Hypothesis 1 in order to ascertain whether the concepts of political education in the Civic Education curriculum connect with students' knowledge and attitude toward political

engagement in Edo State. Hypotheses 2 and 3 were tested using Fisher Z statistics. Every hypothesis was examined at a significance level of 0.05, with a p-value of less than 0.05 indicating significance and a p-value greater than 0.05 indicating non-significance.

4. Results

Hypothesis 1: The knowledge of political education will not significantly correlate the attitude of students towards political participation indices (voter’s registration, voting exercise, rule of law and electoral process).

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Coefficient of the Relationship of Political Education Concept and Political Participation

Variables	N	R	Sig. (2-tailed)
Political education concepts and attitude to voter’s registration	840	.097	.005
Political education concepts and attitude to voting exercise	840	.133	.000
Political education concepts and attitude to rule of law	840	.097	.005
Political education concepts and attitude to electoral processes	840	.109	.002

* Significant at < 0.05

Table 1 showed the levels of the significance of students’ knowledge of political education concepts to their attitudes to political participation. The Table shows that all the four areas of political participation (voter’s registration, voting, rule of law and electoral process) were all significant at the p-value of .005, .000, .005 and .002.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the relationship of Secondary Students’ knowledge of political education concepts in Civic Education curriculum and their attitude to political participation due to gender.

Table 2: Fisher’s Z Statistics of Students’ knowledge of political education concepts and political participation by Gender

Gender	N	R	Zr	Z-critical	Z-calculated
Male	420	.519	.566	-1.34	-1.96
Female	420	.624	.730		

With an Alpha value of .05. Table 2 displays a computed Z-value of -1.34 and a Table value of -1.96. The null hypothesis, which claims that there is no significant difference in the relationship between secondary school students’ knowledge of political education concepts in the Civic Education curriculum and their attitude toward political participation by gender, is accepted because the calculated value falls within the accepted region.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the relationship of Secondary Students’ knowledge of political education concepts in Civic Education curriculum and their attitude to political participation due to school location.

Table 3: Fisher’s Z Statistics of Students’ knowledge of political education concepts and political participation by School Location

Location	N	R	Zr	Z-critical	Z-calculated
Urban	360	.414	.427	-0.82	-1.96
Rural	480	.467	.534		

With an Alpha value of .05. Table 3 has a computed Z-value of -0.82 and a Table value of -1.96. The null hypothesis, which claims that there is no significant difference in the relationship between secondary school students’ knowledge of political education

concepts in the Civic Education curriculum and their attitude toward political participation by school location, is accepted because the calculated value falls within the accepted region.

5. Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis 1 examined the association between political education principles taught in civic education and secondary school students' attitudes toward the rule of law, the electoral process, voter registration, and voting on election day. All of these findings demonstrated a favourable correlation between the attitude toward the research variables and the understanding of political education concepts attained. The 'r' for rule of law is .097 with a p-value of .005, electoral process is .109 with a p-value of .002, voter's registration is .097 with a p-value of .005 and voting exercise is .133 with a p-value of .000. All indicated a positive relationship since the p-values were all less than the alpha value of .05. The implication these results portend for Nigerian democracy judging from the present reality is that they do not support that the subjects are disobedience to rule of law; or that they have apathy to the electoral process, voter's registration and voting during elections. Moreover, the subjects under study have not reached voting age. But those who pass through the same curriculum and are of voting age presently or were in the past are a source of worry whether the concepts they learnt influence their participation in democracy in regards to the variables under study.

If it does, why is there great indifference and general apathy to the electoral process, voter's registration and voting exercise and observed disregard to the rule of law. The actors in the field (politicians) need to be investigated. Do they discharge their roles well? In terms of protection of lives and properties, provision of social amenities, etc. Are they honest in terms of meeting campaign promises? Are they of good conduct and serve as good role models for followers? Are they law abiding that followers could emulate? When these are missing in any society what students learnt as political concepts in schools can hardly make any influence when they become adults in taking critical decisions regarding the variables under study. This is in agreement with Aimiyeagbon (2018) when he recommended that, "government assistance should be sought for in the area of providing the enabling environment to allow values taught in Social Studies classrooms to be imbibed by making learners' environment outside the classrooms similar to what is simulated in the classrooms" (p. 166).

The issue may lie in the fact that knowledge acquired in Civic Education classes is not transferable outside of the educational system, and that the political concepts covered in the curriculum at the junior secondary school level are insufficient to adequately prepare students for the political issues that are

characteristic of the political climate in Nigeria. This is in agreement with Falade (2007) when he noted that political education and democratic culture among Nigerians is poor due to schooling, stressing more on education for jobs; hence he concluded that education for democratic culture needs to move beyond functionalist and vocation-oriented perspective on schooling (education for jobs) to one where the traditional model of schooling becomes a transformational pedagogy. This is in disagreement with the work of Akpeke and Ejere (2014), who found out that many educated persons stand-alooft from active politics because of the defects in the political institutions, structures, personnel and processes which pave way for rigging, blackmail, hooliganism and thuggery, and therefore suggested ways that could make active participation in politics attractive to all, particularly the educated.

Conversely, Hypothesis 2 examined the disparities in the correlation between students' comprehension of political education principles in Civic Education and their perspective on the gender-specific political involvement indices. The outcome showed that there were no appreciable gender-based differences in the relationship. Whether the subjects are male or female students has no bearing on their sentiments toward the political engagement metrics. The results were in conflict with those of Falade (2014), who discovered that gender had an impact on political engagement and that just 12% of women frequently participated in voting, compared to 30% of men. And also, that of International Women's Center (as cited in Uzamere 2018) that, just 18% of women globally were involved in formal political institutions and procedures where decisions concerning the allocation of resources were made by both sexes.

Conversely, Hypothesis 3 examined how students' attitudes regarding the political involvement indices in connection to school location differed depending on their understanding of political education concepts in civic education. The link in terms of school location did not differ much, according to the results. Whether the schools are in an urban or rural location has little bearing on the subjects' opinions about the political involvement indicators.

School location has been viewed as one factor that affects students' academic achievement (Akpan, 2001). Over the past two decades, research has indicated that the education aspirations of students who study in the rural areas lag behind those of their urban counterpart (Haas, 1992; Stern, 1994; Kompits, 1996; Khattri, Riley & Kane, 1997; Kannapel and De Young, 1999, Hu, 2003, Arnold et al, 2005 in Uzamere, 2018).

6. Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, the researchers draw the conclusion that, particularly when the concepts are strengthened, political education in civic education can have a major impact on students' attitudes regarding voting, voter registration exercise, the rule of law, and the election process. It also showed that there are no appreciable differences between gender and school location in terms of students' attitudes toward political engagement and their understanding of political education principles.

7. Recommendations

The study recommends that students at their tender age should be exposed to at least some level of political concepts in Civic Education curriculum since the study revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students, and amongst urban and rural students in their knowledge and attitude towards political participation at the secondary school level.

Arising from the foregoing, the following themes or topics are hereby recommended for addition to the existing Civic Education curriculum contents on political education: Supremacy of the Law, Equality before the Law, Separation of Power, Features of the Rule of Law, Human Rights and the Law, Meaning and Feature of democracy, Institutions of Democracy and their Functions. Others are Elections and Voter's Responsibilities, Basic Qualification for Election and Voting, Procedure for Voting, Electoral Malpractice, Causes of Electoral Malpractice, Consequences of Electoral Malpractice, Concepts of Constitutional Development, Characteristics of the Nigerian Constitution and Functions of the Nigerian Constitution.

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