

Teachers' Perception of the Concept and Objectives of Citizenship Education in Edo South Senatorial District

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Abstract. This study investigated teachers' perception of the concept and objectives of citizenship education by Social Studies teachers in Edo State. A sample of 100 Social Studies teachers were randomly selected from all the public secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District using the table of random numbers. Data were collected through questionnaire designed by the researchers and analyzed with the z-test of independent samples. These were considered suitable because the sample used was further divided into independent sample. Results revealed that there is no difference between the ways the experienced Social Studies teachers and the less experienced perceived the objectives of Citizenship Education. Based on the result, it was recommended, among others, that there should be full scale implementation of the citizenship education curriculum in schools because of the growing incivility in the country.

Keywords: Perception, Concept, Objectives, Citizenship education and Social studies.

1. Introduction

One of the major challenges which has continue to agitate the minds of educational policy makers and implementers is how best to empower the individual to understand his past as well as to adjust to and participate in the present

and most importantly equip him or her with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude for creating an ideal society where everyone is actively involved in promoting the course of social development. Citizenship education has remained the most valuable tool for achieving this.

In our society, the terms "citizen" and "citizenship" are so commonly used society, yet many individuals are not aware of their rights, privileges and the rule of law as stipulated in the country's constitution. A citizen of a country is one born in a given country in which the parents originated from also by birth. Such an individual is accorded all the rights and privileges guaranteed under the constitution of the state and federal government. Citizenship education on the other hand can be defined as educating children from early childhood to become clear thinkers and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning their society. According to Gatherer (2000), he described citizenship education as not just a subject in the curriculum but also a set of values and attitudes. It requires a change in the culture of many schools with their wider communities; it is a worthwhile value and attitude that can help us and children in particular to exhibit civic dispositions such as civic courage, civility, honesty, integrity, respect, humility and service to the nation when called upon. The concept of citizenship

education is central to the growth and survival of any sovereign nation. This is why Cherryholmes (1980) described citizenship education as irreducibly concerned with transmitting information and knowledge about society and politics to students.

The most interesting view of citizenship education according to Ejiogu (2011) is that it is process of learning to live as a neutral and acceptable member of the community to which one belongs. This means that citizenship education has the potentials of making the individual become critically aware of his reality in a manner that will lead him to take effective action upon it (Frieria, 1972). Recognizing the importance of citizenship awareness and education, the National Policy on Education (2014) in its philosophy emphasized the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen.

The general acceptable objectives of citizenship education as incorporated into school curriculum in Nigeria include the following:

- To create awareness of the provision of the Nigerian constitution and the need for democracy in Nigeria;
- To create adequate and functional political literacy amongst Nigerians;
- To sensitize Nigerians on their rights and civic responsibilities;
- To make Nigerians fully aware of their right and duties and to respect the rights of others;
- To assist in the production of responsible well informed and self-reliant Nigerian citizens;
- To inculcate right values and attitudes for the development of the individual and the Nigerian societies.

In view of these objectives, workshops and seminars were organized to ensure better understanding and proper application among teachers and educators. Hence citizenship education was to be taught in schools through courses like social studies, politics and law, etc. This, as Nwana (1996) explained, would kindle the love, awareness and appreciation of the

young people to their motherland in a deliberate rather than in an accidental manner.

To Osakwe and Itedjere (1993), Social studies is intricately interwoven with citizenship education. Social studies has so much to do with the development of civic and citizenship knowledge, attitude, values and skills. It can be pointed out that the essence of Social studies education is citizenship transmission. The hallmark of Social studies education is the development in individual's desirable skills, knowledge, values and attitude to enable them cope effectively in their environment. Besides, it is a study that places emphasis on interpersonal skills and relationships. The relationship can be further pointed in what Osakwe and Itedjere (1993) captured as the ultimate aim of Social studies when is to produce people who are civically competence and productive as social human being. Therefore, Social studies can be seen as an instrument of civic responsibility. Its focus is on effective civic responsibility that can enhance a positive permanent change, not only in the behavior but also in attitudes, skills, knowledge and value acquisition in teaching. The present education system (that is the education in Nigeria as inherited from the colonial masters) instead of developing positive values in the society in which the African child lives, tends to alienate him from the cultural environment (in other words, out of his environment).

The above phenomenon attracted serious criticisms as no education is worth its name if it fails to educate individuals in their own environment. The need to educate the Nigerian child in his physical, social, political, economic, cultural and religious environment is crucial to the emphasis on citizenship education in the nation's schools. In this regard, the role of the school has always been extolled as a veritable agent of the inculcation of the right types of values, attitude, behaviours, habits and skills in the society (Iyamu, 1995). Perhaps one of the principal justifications for citizenship education in Nigerian schools is that it helps to produce good citizens. The crux of citizenship education is to transmit those values, attitudes and attributes considered desirable for the

individuals and the society. It emphasizes building a good society through the building of good citizens. These traits include honesty, obedience, dedication, respect, loyalty, handwork, orderliness, tolerance, patriotism, fairness and so on.

Finally, citizenship education is an indispensable concept in social studies education that helps to prepare the child for social responsibility in ever growing and dynamic society.

2. Statement of the Problem

The dearth of citizenship education as a panacea for national development and national reconstruction is being lamented as this has frustrated efforts to promote and inculcate the spirit of national consciousness, patriotism and nationalism among the Nigerian citizens. Therefore there is a dire need to foster citizenship education as a threshold to enlighten Nigerians on how to promote national development. To achieve this objective, the determination of perception of Social studies teachers, of the concept and objectives of citizenship education became imperative. The question is how do Social studies teachers perceive the concept and objectives of citizenship education?

3. Research Questions

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the researcher seeks to find answers to the following research questions:

- Does the experience of Social studies teachers influence their perception on the concept of citizenship education?
- Does the experience of the Social studies teachers' influence their perception on the objectives of citizenship education?

4. Hypotheses

Based on the foregoing questions, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study: There is no significant difference between the perception of experienced social studies teachers

and the less experienced social studies teachers on the concept of citizenship education.

There is no significant difference between the perception of experienced social studies teachers and the less experienced social studies teachers on the objectives of citizenship education.

5. Research Methodology

This study used the survey research design because it looked at social studies teachers' perceptions of the concept and objectives of citizenship education in Edo South Senatorial District. The population for the study consists of 220 Social studies teachers in the public secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. Out of the population of 220, a sample of 100 Social studies teachers were randomly selected using a table of random numbers for the sample.

5.1 Instrument

The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. The 20-item questionnaire elicited information on teachers' perception of the concept and objectives of citizenship education. The scoring technique adopted for the 20-item questionnaire was a four point Scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The respondents were required to respond to statements provided by identifying with a particular level of response among the options listed. Each variable concept and objectives have 10-items each. The instrument was reviewed by three experts and their suggestions were incorporated into the final instrument to ensure content validity. A test re-test measurement technique was used to ascertain the instrument's reliability. This was done through a pilot study which was conducted using 20 teachers of Social studies at the junior secondary schools and which did not form part of the population for the study. The data emanating from the test was treated with Cronbach Alpha and a reliability of 0.67 was established. The researchers personally administered the copies of the questionnaire to the respondents in the various schools. The questionnaires were administered to 10 Social studies teachers in each of the seven local

government areas in Edo South Senatorial District. The completed questionnaire were collected and analyzed with the z-test of

independent samples. This is considered suitable because the sample used was further divided into independent samples.

6. Presentation of Results

Hypothesis 1

H₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of experienced social studies teachers and less experienced social studies teachers on the concept of citizenship education.

Table 1: Social studies teachers’ perception of the concept of citizenship education by experience

Category	N	X	SD	Calculated z	Critical z	Decision
Experienced	48	30.27	5.27	6.6	1.96	H ₀ Rejected
Less experienced	52	20.7				p>.05

The hypothesis is rejected at .05 level of significance since there was a significant difference. From the table above, the calculated z which is represented by 6.6 is greater than the critical z-value of 1.96; therefore, falls within the rejection region. This means that the H₀ is rejected. The result shows that teachers with many years of experience had high perception of the concept and objectives of citizenship education than the less experienced Social studies teachers. However, teachers already in the job should be given in-service training such as workshops and seminars to enhance their teaching ability and performance in the job. In a cursory look at the citizenship education curriculum, Osakwe and Itedjere (2009) captured that the ultimate aim of Social studies is to produce people who are civically competent and production of social human beings. Social studies can be seen as instrument on civic responsibility. Its focus is on effective civic responsibility which can enhance a positive permanent change not only in behavior of individuals but also in attitude, skills, knowledge and value acquisition.

Hypothesis 2

H₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of experienced Social studies teachers and the less experienced Social studies teachers on the objectives of citizenship education.

Table 2: Social studies teachers’ perception of the objectives of citizenship education by experience

Category	N	X	SD	Calculated z	Critical z	Decision
Experienced	48	30.18	5.2	1.12	1.96	H ₀ Not rejected
Less experienced	52	31.7	5.42			p>.05

The null hypothesis is not rejected since there is significant difference at .05 level of significance as shown above. From the table above, the calculated z-value is represented by 1.12 which is less than the critical z-table value of 1.96. This means that the calculated z falls with the non-rejection region. Consequently, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected at a significant level of .05. This implies that long years teaching do not influence the way Social studies teachers perceive the objectives of citizenship education.

- Full scale implementation of the citizenship education curriculum should begin because of the growing incivility.
- In-service training, seminars and workshops should be given to the less experienced Social studies teachers on the concept and objectives of citizenship education in order to enhance their performance and become effective instructors.
- There should be text materials and instructional aids for public enlightenment.

7. Recommendations

- Research into different aspects of the programme should be encouraged and reputable journals on citizenship education should be floated and published periodically.

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