

Analysis of Value Content of Civic Education and Social Studies for Citizenship Values in Nigeria

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Received: 21 February 2021; **Accepted:** 20 May 2021; **Published:** 21 June 2021

To cite this article (APA): Muritala, A. R., & Balogun, I. N. (2021). Analysis of Value Content of Civic Education and Social Studies for Citizenship Values in Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Assessment in Teaching and Learning*, 11(1), 106-113. <https://doi.org/10.37134/ajatel.vol11.1.10.2021>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.37134/ajatel.vol11.1.10.2021>

Abstract

The link between Civic Education and Social Studies is a unique one, the Social Studies curriculum consists of citizenship and societal values, which are also related to Civic Education. This makes the two subjects to be seen as a strong and effective tool to facilitate the production of responsible citizens. Teaching and learning of Social Studies will be meaningful when it is value-based, teachers are expected to guide the students to acquire value education inherent in many topics in the two subjects. However, it must be noted that the purpose of education is for citizenship. But to ensure that students develop an understanding of their country's most cherished values becomes a debate between Civic Education and Social Studies in the Nigerian educational system. Values are to be rated as important contents of both subjects offered to students at the Basic level in Nigeria. Hence, the need to ascertain the subject that communicates the good values that can contribute to training the learners to assume the status of being a citizen. This study examined the value content of civic education and Social Studies towards citizenship values in Nigeria education system based on the topics taught in the two subjects. The study adopted an ex post facto research design in analyzing the curriculum content of both Civic Education and Social Studies. The collected data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and the findings showed that the value content of Social Studies is greater than that of Civic education. This further testifies to the general agreement that Civic Education is a dimension and subset of Social Studies. The study, therefore, recommended that Social Studies be promoted over Civic Education at all levels of education for effective citizenship value in Nigeria.

Keywords: Civic Education, Social Studies, Value Content, Citizenship Value

INTRODUCTION

The ultimate goal of Social Studies is to instill positive social attitudes and values in young citizens of a country to enable them to contribute to the overall development of their society. But the federal government of Nigeria also reiterates the need to promote Civic Education in schools to address social and anti-civic issues. The focus of this study is not to identify the type of social problems bedeviling the Nigerian society. Those issues are well known as it seems efforts geared towards curbing them had not been fruitful as expected. Social Studies and Civic Education as an instrument for preparing and mobilizing young learners in school is to enable them to cultivate an awareness and understanding that would transform them into citizens which will be equipped with skills, competencies, necessary values and reasoned judgments to interact and interrelate and contribute positively to the economic, social, political and cultural development of the societies they find themselves (Okam, 2011). However, it is expected that every student who is taught Social Studies and Civic instructions must be functional members of his/her society and any society in which they find themselves.

Therefore, all Social Studies students have been exposed to contents that have imbued civic consciousness and alacrity in them. The idea conforms with the exposition of Dewey on the meaning

of Education. Dewey recognizes the fact that the educational process is an outcome of the connection between one's self and society. Dewey believed that education and life are inseparable but interrelated. Also emphasized that children learn best by acting in the world (Early Childhood Today, 2000). Learners at all levels of education need to develop an essential character that will promote citizenship values. These values include, but not limited to, respect for the dignity of persons, integrity, self-discipline, tolerance, compassion, patriotism. In Nigeria, the generally known definition of Social Studies among the arrays of definition is that which present Social Studies as "the study of human interaction with the physical and social environment. The aim of the Social Studies Curriculum for a basic, and post-basic school emphasized the development of learner's desire for knowledge and continued learning where learners learn to develop basic concepts, values, skills, attitudes necessary to live in the society (Ogundare, 2003). Ajiboye (2008) opined that the main objective of Social Studies in the Nigerian education system is to provide citizenship training because civic issues had been part of the subject since birth. Nevertheless, civic competence remains one of the responsibilities that are more central to Social Studies as the subject makes it a central aim to equip learners with the abilities to use knowledge, skills and values to improve their community, nation and the world (Susan, 2010).

From the onset of the Nigerian educational system, civic education has been a core curriculum for Universal Basic Education levels ending at the Upper Basic (Junior Secondary School). It was in recent time that the Civic Education curriculum was introduced into Senior Secondary School. In some developed countries, civic education varies across and within schools. For instance civics offerings range from dedicated Social Studies and American Government classes (Owen, 2015). Azebamwa (2010) presented Civic Education as one of the innovative subjects which were introduced to give both formal and informal training and awareness to the citizens to develop in them that knowledge, values and skills needed for effective participation in the political process and the civil society. Consequently, basic education became compulsory for all citizens to acquire, therefore this study focused on Basic education (Lower basic, Middle basic, and Upper basic, JSS 1-3). One of the findings of a related study shows that the goals of Social Studies curricula at the Basic level reflect relevant civic education needs, issues and aspirations of the contemporary Nigerian society (Nwaubani & Azuh, 2014).

It is amazing, today, to see some Nigerian youths engaging in violence, intolerance and other antisocial behaviours despite the introduction of Civic Education as a subject in our basic and post-basic levels. Civic Education was introduced as a compulsory subject into the basic and secondary education sub-sector of the Nigerian state. A former Minister of Education, Sam Egwu, pointed out that the subject was introduced as part of then-President Yar'Adua's 7-point reform agenda aimed at improving the growth of the human capital development of Nigeria. It was to refocus and reposition the country to further realize its full inert potentials as envisioned by the founding fathers (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, 2009). Among the earlier efforts was the 2004 review of the educational policy which led to a shift of focus to contemporary local and global issues such as drug abuse, youth unemployment and restiveness, HIV/AIDS education, environmental education, family life education, children/women trafficking, and peace and conflict resolution among others. The review which was to address; guiding learners towards the development of skills to adapt to ecological dynamics and as well as help them appreciate the diverse cultures, history and basic issues that make them humans led to the severance of citizenship issues which had been part of integrated Social Studies philosophy for over forty-one years from the Social Studies curriculum. Also, one time National Council of Social Studies President Steve Golberg stated that, children in the early grades need to be more conscious of their society so that they will understand their roles as a well informed citizens (Walsh, 2013).

In light of this, the Nigerian school system will help to develop the students' desirable social norms, values and national ethics that can help propel the country towards human capital development. This is because basic and secondary school levels are the fundamental foundation for other stages of the educational system where students are taught basic norms and ethics to become responsible adults for their actions. Education is perceived not only as an instrument for accelerated national development but also as the means for the "integration of individuals into sound and effective citizens" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Akinsolu (2010) observed that the failure of Civic Education among learners at the school level has a serious negative effect on the learner's attitudes. This partially explains what is responsible for

the rate at which antisocial behaviour has ravaged our country. The current trend of things and the turn of events is too bad to be desired. Nigeria is bedeviled with myriads of problems, such as corruption, indiscipline, greed, tribalism, sectionalism, religious intolerance, vandalism, terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, hostage-taking and insurgency. These anti-social problems have adversely affected and still affect the political, economic and social life of the people. They have generally frustrated the efforts of development in the country.

However, the two related subjects remain the components in the Nigerian educational system, designed to train and develop intelligent, responsible and self-directing citizens who would explore opportunities in developing their potentialities to contribute maximally to the improvement of groups living within the societal framework of a nation (Okam, 2011). As a result of the importance of Civic Education in cultivating effective citizenship values, the educational policymakers gave it a prominent place within the core subjects of the school curriculum in the Nigerian educational system. Furthermore, Duncan Arne who was the secretary to the President Obama had earlier pointed out that Social Studies remains a fundamental segment to a complete education, thereby emphasizes a continuous Social Studies and citizenship education (Duncan, 2011).

In another submission, there was an increase in the interest in Civic Education as an instructional segment of Social Studies and as a core subject at basic and senior secondary school levels in Nigeria. This makes schools an agency to cultivate positive values in students through pragmatic pedagogical strategies by the teachers. Among these strategies is allowing students to learn some positive values through various school-based clubs and social organizations such as school assemblies and meetings, Parent Teachers Associations' meetings and so on (Mezieobi, 2012). The outcome of the study carried out by Nwaubani and Azuh (2014) revealed that the majority of the respondents are aware of the need to use Social Studies to teach or promote civic competence of pupils in Nigeria. Also in an earlier submission, it has been argued that Social Studies had remained a subject capable of playing the role of giving civic and citizenship education (National Council for Social Studies, 2007).

Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (2007) attributed the severance to the unwieldy scope of the Social Studies curriculum-making classroom implementation, most especially of the citizenship goals and content questionable and ineffective. On the contrary, Ogunyemi (2011) stated that the severance was more of curriculum politics than a result of in-depth inferences based on research. Presently, educators are divided as to which of the two subjects Civic Education and Social Studies is best suited to handle the civic and value needs of the country. To assume that citizen education is best from Social Studies, an appropriate citizens education should be design by Social Studies Educationists as new frontiers areas of Social Studies because they are described as professionals in which citizens education appropriately fits (Mezieobi, 2012) In the same vein, the Nigerian government from the onset not clear of which of the subjects can best teach civility. This is because, to achieve the development of sound and effective citizens including full integration of individuals to the community, Civic Education should be taught effectively as a separate school subject or part of Social Studies (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

However, it could be deduced from the foregoing that students, who are exposed to these two subjects, will fully understand the concepts of citizens, citizenship, and also acquaints them with true position and the role to play in the community in which they find themselves. This means Citizenship education acquired through Civic Education and Social Studies cultivates in the learners the values that will enable them to become nationally conscious as well as becoming patriotic for nation-building. Citizenship has also been conceived to be necessary to a strong civic education curriculum, but it is noticeable that schools now concentrate on serving the economy only (Hartoonian & Van Scotter, 2012).

Unequivocally, the basic impetus for the introduction of Civic Education into the Nigerian educational system was the inculcation and transmission of desired values, attitudes and orientation capable of enhancing the continuous growth and development of the country. It was expected that a child who had been exposed to an adequate content of Civic Education, would be sufficiently grounded in ethics and values that can engender growth and development. Including allowing young people to be raised to the above-average scope of development in civic commitment (Kahne & Middaugh, 2008). Unfortunately, the reverse is the case. Students who were brought up with Civic Education are enmeshed in anti-social behaviours that are inimical to the reason for which Civic education was introduced. They engage in corrupt practices, vandalism, arson, raping, theft, thuggery, banditry,

kidnapping, human trafficking, terrorism, electoral malpractices, examination malpractices among others which are far from the desired citizenship education.

The then erosion of the values and attitudes of young people, and the upsurge in juvenile crimes as well the general alienation of the people from societal value system had led to the introduction of Social Studies as a core subject at the junior secondary segment of Nigeria educational sector to salvage the country from those anomalies. To fulfil this, there cannot be an effective Social Studies programme without value Education. A debate in the literature had asked a question on where citizen education belongs? The response from those who are professionally grounded in Social Studies education had pointed that presently, there is much agreement that citizens education stands to be the main focus of Social Studies, and therefore the teaching of citizenship education should be maintained by experts in Social Studies (Mezieobi and Danladi, 2012; Mezieobi, 2012). With the resurgence of crime and criminalities among the youths who were expected to possess improved civic consciousness and values, as well as the disenchantment of social educators with Civic Education, there is a need to look at the value content of both Social Studies and Civic Education to present an informed position. Hence, this study seeks an analysis of the value content of Civic Education and Social Studies for citizenship values in Nigeria.

This study intends to analyse the value content of Civic Education and Social Studies towards the realization of Citizenship values in Nigeria. Specifically, the study examines the level of the value content of Civic Education; the level of the value content of Social Studies; and compares the value content of Civic Education and Social Studies.

METHODOLOGY

This study is an Ex post facto research design due to the nature of data collection deployed for the study. The researchers cannot manipulate the independent variable because it had already occurred therefore, the observation was being made on the dependent variable. The existing social studies curriculum and civic education curriculum are used to elicit data for the analysis of the value content of both subjects in this study. This means this study did not use any respondent as the entire content of the curriculum were analyzed for the value content to establish the extent to which the value content of the Social Studies and Civic Education varies. This was done with the use of a checklist with which the entries in each curriculum were checked.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One: What is the level of value Contents of Civic Education?

From the content of the Civic Education curriculum as illustrated in Table 1, it was observed that the value content of the Civic Education curriculum relevant to citizenship values is 18 while those not relevant to it is 17. The value content, therefore, represents 0.5142 approximately 51.42% of the content of Civic Education.

Research Question Two: What is the level of value contents of Social Studies?

From the content of the Social Studies curriculum as presented in Table 2, it was observed that, at the lower basic school level, five out of a total of six of the Social Studies curriculum content addressed values relevant for effective citizenship value. This implies 0.83 of the total content representing 83.0%. At the middle basic school level, five out of ten were relevant to the value content of effective citizenship. This amount to 0.50 represents 50.0% of the curriculum content. At the upper basic school level, eight out of ten were relevant to value content representing 0.80 i.e., 80.0% of the curriculum content at that level. Generally, the value content of the Social Studies Curriculum is 18 out of a total of 26 contents. This represents 69.23 value content in the overall Social Studies content of the curriculum.

Research Question Three: What is the comparison of value contents of Civic Education and Social Studies?

From the output of the various content of the two curricula as shown in Table 3, as well as the corresponding chart, it can be concluded that the Social Studies Curriculum with 69.23% value content is greater in terms of citizenship value in comparison to Civic Education with a value content of 51.42%. It shows in the outcome of this study that the value content of Civic Education is not as sufficient as that of Social Studies. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that there cannot be an effective Social Studies programme without value instruction, in tandem with the fact that value education is capable of curing Nigeria's national challenges (Mezieobi and Danlad, 2012). This makes Civic Education remain innovative and a contested field of study in which its goals require strict debate. The study has also found that the value content of Social Studies is greater than that of Civic Education, the finding is in line with (Nwaubani & Azuh, 2014). This finding is of the assumption that promoting the intellectual processes, values, democratic dispositions in students to be active and engaged participants in public life is more central to Social Studies (National Curriculum for Social Studies, 2010). While comparing the value content of both Civic Education and Social Studies, it shows in the chart that the percentage level of Social Studies is greater than that of Civic Education, this further negates the position of (Ogunyemi, 2011). But in line with (Mezieobi, 2012). The result of a related study also revealed that the majority of teachers of Social Studies are aware of the need to use Social Studies to teach civic competence to pupils in Nigeria (Nwaubani & Azuh, 2014). In essence, students are better equipped in Social Studies for citizenship values. Furthermore, expected development and national transformations can only be attained when the citizens acquire and demonstrate the required values and qualities.

Table 1. Analysis of the value content of the 9- Year Basic Education Civic Education Curricula (Lower, Middle and Upper Basic Levels)

SN	Content	Value Content	
		Relevant	Not Relevant
1	Introduction to Civic Education		×
2	Our values	√	
3	Information and communication technology		×
4	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV /AIDS)		×[u1]
5	Teenage pregnancy	√	
6	Youth empowerment		×
7	Citizenship	√	
8	Goals of citizenship education		×
9	Characteristics of democracy		×
10	The major pillars of democracy		×
11	Human rights	√	
12	Responsibility of individuals, groups and government in Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)	√	
13	Cultism	√	
14	Orderliness	√	
15	Respect for constituted authority	√	
16	Capitalist democracy	√	
17	Meaning and forms of political apathy		×
18	Importance of Citizenship Education		×
19	Meaning and forms of political apathy		×
20	Popular participation	√	

21	Human Right	√	
22	Drug use and abuse	√	
23	Prevention of drug abuse		×
24	Drug law, enforcement and administration		×
25	Responsible parenthood	√	
26	Traffic regulation		×
27	Interpersonal relations	√	
28	Inter-communal relationship	√	
29	Characteristics and categories of human right		×
30	Fighting political apathy		×
31	Public service	√	
32	Democracy		×
33	Rule of Law	√	
34	Constitutional democracy		×
35	Human trafficking	√	
	Overall Total	18	17

Table 2. Analysis of the value content of the 9-Year Basic Education Social Studies Curricula

S/N	Level	Curriculum Content	Value Content	
			Relevant	Not Relevant
Lower Basic (Pry 1-3)				
1		Family	√	
2		Culture	√	
3		Social problems and issues	√	
4		Social values	√	
5		Science and Technology and society		×
6		Health issues Drug abuse	√	
Middle Basic (Pry 4-6)				
1		Family (Living in the family)	√	
2		Culture	√	
3		Citizenship	√	
4		National economy (Employment)		×
5		Infrastructure/Facilities (services)		×
6		Health issues		×
7		Government and non-government agencies		×
8		People and the environment	√	
9		Agricultural technology		×
10		Social issues and problems	√	
Upper Basic (JSS 1-3)				
1		Social environment	√	
2		Introduction to social studies education		×
3		National economy		×
4		Socialization	√	
5		Social problems and issues	√	
6		National unity and integration	√	

7		Culture (values)	√	
8		Social vices	√	
9		Peace and conflict	√	
10		World issues, global and international cooperation	√	
	Overall	Total	18	8

Table 3. Civic Education & Social Studies Value Contents

Subject	% of Value Contents
Civic Education	51.42
Social Studies	69.23

CONCLUSION

This study pressed at the analysis of the value content of Civic Education and Social Studies to find out which of the two subjects better equip learners with values for citizenship in Nigeria. It can be concluded from the findings of this study that, for citizenship value, Social Studies is better positioned to impact the desired values in learners than Civic Education. This implies that, rather than further expand scarce resources in furthering the civic education curriculum which is not adequate containing the citizen values that is desired as compared to Social Studies. This is because there has been an enduring controversy on the civic and citizenship role of Social Studies education, also, it was established in the Nigeria National documents that Social Studies contents have been tried from the beginning to promote civic competence. Therefore, Social Studies should be promoted to be thought all through the basic and secondary school levels and should be upgraded over Civic Education as it is recognized officially as a subject lauded with the vision of societal values and directed change-oriented purpose.

RECOMMENDATION

Founded on the outcome of this study, Social Studies remain the appropriate subject to better channel the value quality to the learners to achieve citizenship values, this is because, civic education is directed towards helping Nigeria as a state to live in unity as one democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and practice (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). On the contrary, Social Studies provided the generalized and specific objectives to be achieved when the learners are taught the contents, thus Social Studies programme emphasize the development of a responsibility to socialize individuals including helping them to develop certain skills, values and attitudes necessary to live in the society, this corroborates the earlier submission in (Walsh, 2013). It is also evident in the literature that issues bothering on the teaching of civic concepts within Social Studies are abundant in education (Nwaubani & Azuh, 2014). This calls for a pragmatic approach to implementing the curriculum (this also remains a challenge to Social Studies teachers) to help the learners at pre-basic, basic, and post-basic levels to shape their character to contribute meaningfully to their immediate environment and society at large. Social Studies should be given its pride of place in Nigeria educational system for effective citizenship value by being made compulsory at basic and senior secondary school levels, this is in line with the suggestions of (Duncan, 2011).

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