

DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF CIVIC EDUCATION IN STUDENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF LAGOS STATE NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study was carried out to design, implement and evaluate the impact of civic information, education and communication (IEC) programme on College of Education Students in Lagos State. The study utilized a participatory research model within the action research paradigm and employed a 2x2, non-randomized factorial design. Hypothesis were generated and tested in the study at 0.05 alpha level. Focus group discussion guide and civic knowledge attitude (CKA) questionnaires were used for the study. Two hundred and forty (240) subjects were involved in the study, drawn from the 100 level social studies students in two Lagos State Colleges of Education. The data collected were analysed in two parts, Qualitative and Quantitative. The qualitative results revealed that by the mid-post-activities stages, students had become more knowledgeable about many of the civic issues and equally manifested attitudes that could be described as positive to the fundamental concepts. The major finding of the quantitative data was that the participatory approach was more effective than the conventional method of teaching in fostering students' acquisition of knowledge of civic issues and it is also revealed that the main effect of treatment on attitude was not significant. The study therefore recommended the adoption of the participatory approach in the teaching of civic education concept in order to enhance student's knowledge about and attitude towards sustainable development.

Keywords: Promoting, Knowledge, Attitude, Civic Education, Students, Development

Introduction

Man is a social and political animal. He does not live in isolation but rather he lives in a society. In order for him to live peacefully in the society, he needs to know the rules and regulations governing such society; his right, duties and obligation to the society; the responsibilities of the society to those living within it. The history, customs and traditions of his society; as well as that of his neighbours. Civic Education is a relatively new subject in the National curriculum. Since the Presidential Forum on Education directed the National Technical committee on Civil Education (NTCCE) to collaborate with the National Orientation Agency (NOA) to coordinate the development and implementation of Civic Education at the Universal Basic Education level nationwide. This decision was the outcome of the presidential concern for the development and transformation of Nigerian youths into effective and responsible citizens who are able to productively contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS). Despite the various socio-political reforms embarked upon by the Fourth Republic administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo from 1999, the national civic, political and economic landscape has remained beset by the same age-old problems that have always hindered national development.

A major factor for this is the inability of the generality of the people to appreciate the need for or even comprehend these reforms. It was in the context of developing long-term solutions and addressing the roots of the problems that the Civic Education for the Universal Basic Education has been developed (Adeniyi 2007). The Civic Education curriculum addresses young Nigerians in the formative educational years. The contents address issues that are important to developing young Nigerian people into responsible citizens. However, Civil Education curriculum will enable our young people imbibe the values, norms, knowledge, actions and activities for sustainable development.

The concept of sustainable development has been an age long discourse in all education matters, for education is a human development process. The child is prepared for the present and the future. Schools are one of the societal institutions that have an active role in helping children and youths learn to live and work in their nation. Hence, it is of critical importance that teachers make their classrooms places where children develop a sense of involvement, where children feel that their ideas will be given a respectful hearing, and where they know that part of the responsibility for evaluating their learning will be placed upon them. There should be daily occasions to ask pupils what they think, how they propose a problem be solved, what features they think should be labeled on a class-constructed map, and so on. In such a classroom environment the meaning of involvement is learned, and goodwill and mutual respect are observed and experienced. Since children learn what they live, and since we want children to learn the satisfactions of participatory approach, we should look for concrete ways in which pupil input has a better-than-even chance of influencing policy. Where civic sensitivity and responsibility are nurtured, children tend to develop a feeling of loyalty and protectiveness toward their class. This sometimes expresses itself in surprising, rewarding ways.

The drive towards re-engineering the process of teaching and learning civic education in our primary and secondary schools has become very imperative especially in the face of dwindling levels of national consciousness, social harmony and patriotic zeal. In the 80's it became painfully evident that the lack of civic education and patriotic orientation had led to disorientation in schools and the larger society. The consequences were being felt at all strata of our society. Recent occurrence have indicated that Nigeria is on the brink of loosing its much cherished sense of nationhood, cultural identity and indeed, hospitable spirit. The prevalent trend of corruption, indiscipline, disrespect for both elders and the rule of law, noncommittal to duty etc are some of the manifestations of negative values in the Nigerian society. They call for urgent value re-orientation because of their far-reaching impact on sustainable development. However, teachers are very critical to the success of this bold initiative. Theirs is to inculcate the right kind of values through effective teaching of civic education. Civic education has evolved into so many approaches that teachers are confused by the different content, skills, and attitudes that are being promoted under the banner of civic education. The challenge facing educators today in regard to civic education is to produce a unified and synthesized approach that will select and combine the best elements of currently existing approaches.

Statement of the problem

This study was carried out to develop a civic education programme using a participatory approach to determine the impact of the programme on the civic-related knowledge, and attitudes of College of Education students. Two basic research questions were addressed and tested in this study.

1. Will there be any change in civic knowledge and attitudes of the students before and after their exposure to the participatory civic programmes?
2. Will there be any difference in the civic-related knowledge of students exposed to the participatory civic programmes and those not so exposed?

Hypotheses

- Ho₁ -There will be no significant difference in the mean knowledge scores of students exposed to the participatory civic programmes and those in the control group.
- Ho₂ - There will be no significant difference in the mean post-test attitude scores of students exposed to the participatory civic programmes and those in the control group.
- Ho₃ - There is no significant difference in the mean knowledge scores of students before and after exposure to the participatory civic education programmes.
- Ho₄ - There is no significant difference in the mean attitude scores of students before and after expose to the participatory civic education programmes.

Research Method

Instrumentation:

The following instruments were used in this study.

- (1) The Focus Group Discussion Guide.
- (2) Civic knowledge and Attitudes Questionnaire (CKAQ).
 - A. Civic Knowledge Test (CKT)
 - B. Civic Attitudes Scale (CAS)

1. The Focus Group Discussion Guide

This comprises of civic related questions to guide the researcher to collect qualitative information from the participating groups. The purpose of the method is to elicit information from the students of Colleges of Education in Lagos State, on their knowledge of civic and civic problems. The focus Group Discussion involved the development of a guide with unstructured questions.

2. Civic Knowledge and Attitudes Questionnaire (CKAQ)

The instrument was developed so as to measure the acquisition of knowledge and attitude in students. The measuring instruments were made to undergo a two-phase validation procedure. The instruments were presented to some experts for face and content validity and a field-testing was attempted. Technical errors detected were taken note of and amendments were effected. The result of the trial out was analysed, and the Kuder-Richardson formula (KR_{21}) was employed to determine the reliability coefficient of the Civic Knowledge Test, the result gave a reliability of 0.86 while the Civic Attitudes Scale Questionnaire were validated using Cronbach alpha measure. The result obtained was 0.84 which was found to be appropriate and reliable for the study.

The major civic issues selected for this study are:

- Our values
- Social issues

Lagos State of Nigeria is purposively selected for this study. The State is selected because it represents a typical Nigeria urban City with its attendant civic problems. 240 part 1 Social Studies Students in two colleges of education in Nigeria participated in the study. The intact class approach was adopted in the study. The researcher made use of the attendance register for the selection of the subjects. All subjects with over 91% of attendance in the experiment were finally selected for the study. The purposive random sampling procedure was employed to select the two Colleges of Education involved in the study. However, the two Colleges of Education were randomly assigned to one experimental condition and control condition. Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija, Epe, Lagos State (MOCPED) was used as the experimental group, while Adeniran Ogunson College of Education, Oto-Ijanikin, Lagos (AOCOED), served as the control group.

Data collection and analysis

Qualitative data on the prevailing knowledge, attitudes and practices (skills) among social studies students regarding the two civic issues of study was collected through the focus group discussion technique before the intervention activities. This data served two purposes, first was to provide some sort of framework for identifying those knowledge and attitude traits of participants that would later be measured quantitatively and monitored in the course of the study. Secondly, the data helped to gain an insight into those intervention strategies that were likely to be more effective e.g. drama, video shows, peer education, field trip etc.

The following steps were therefore followed in analyzing the focus group discussions:

- The taped discussions were replayed and transcribed into a written form. The research considered words, context, internal consistency, frequency or extensiveness; intensity and specificity.
- The transcriptions were compared with the summary notes made by the Secretary (one of the participants) during the discussions.
- The similarities and differences in opinions (the constants) that emerged regarding each civic issues of study.
- These constants were expanded and brought to focus based on other findings that emerged in the group discussions.
- The themes that emerged in the groups and across the topic areas were drawn out and linked together.
- Based on the summary of the groups' content and the objectives of the study, synthesis of the major themes of responses for each civic issue was made.
- Direct words that best represent certain position were drawn out. Some of the findings from the focus groups discussions are presented here under the broad civic-related topics identified for the study.
 1. Civic education
 2. Our values
 3. Attitude towards cultural diversity

4. Respect for other people
5. Social issues – traffic regulations and attitudes to accident

Results and discussion (qualitative)

The focus group discussions revealed that there were significant gaps in the civic knowledge of the students about many of the civic issues dealt with.

In particular, participants held wrong notions about the types of National Honours Awards and reasons for National Honours.

Also the participants had attitudes that were common among the students such as negative patronage for Nigerian goods, values that promote peace and violation of traffic regulations. They preferred shunting rather than obey traffic light provided. There is noticeable improvement in their attitudes towards these habits. There were also negative attitudes regarding the use of communal efforts, helping each other in times of need, respect for each other and shared responsibilities. While some of the participants seemed to demonstrate some degree of knowledge of the problems involved in doing them.

To sum up, the discussions showed that the participants had more knowledge about the civic issues in question and the need for sustainable development.

The qualitative findings on the whole demonstrated the usefulness of IEC activities used in this study, as indeed commented by the participants themselves. By mid-activities stage of the study, a slight positive change in student’s knowledge base and attitudes were noticeable.

This trend continues for many of the other items in the questionnaire. They also requested for the formation of a club, which interestingly has since been formed, christened the *Elite Club*, now awaiting inauguration.

Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data on participant’s knowledge and attitudes (K&A) regarding the selected civic-related issues was collected at three successive stages in the study:

1. The Pre-Activities Stage: This is the stage before the IEC activities.
2. The Mid-Activities Stage: This was done half-way into the IEC activities.
3. The Post-Activities Stage: At the conclusion of all the IEC activities.

The purpose of these data was to monitor and describe in quantitative terms the changes (if any) that occurred in participants’ knowledge and attitudes as are related to civic issues, and which could be attributed to the intervention contrived.

For such a data base to be meaningful therefore, it presupposes that participants from whom such data are collected should have been consistent in attending and participating in the activities. This proved an uphill task for the researcher. However, participants with over 91% attendance were eventually chosen to take part.

Results and discussion (quantitative)

The summary of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the knowledge scores of experimental subjects in the pre-test, middle-test and post-test is presented below in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of ANOVA of the Knowledge Scores of Subjects In the Pre-test, Middle-test and Post-test

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>Sum of Square</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between Groups	25238.77	2	12619.39	823.53	.000*
Within Groups	5470.49	357	15.32		
Total	30709.26	359			

*Significant at P < .05

From Table 1, the difference between the mean knowledge scores of subjects in the pre-test, mid-test and post-test is significant [$F(2,359) = 823.53; P < .05$]. This means that the performance of subject in the pre-test, mid-test and post-test is significantly different.

In order to trace the source of the difference the multiple comparisons of the pre-test, mid-test and post-test knowledge scores of subjects is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Multiple Comparisons of Pre-test, Mid-test and Post-test Knowledge of Scores of Subject

(I) Score	(J) Score	Mean Difference	Std-Error	Sig.
Pre-test Score	Mid-test Score	-5.958*	.505	.000
	Post-test Score	-19.975*	.505	.000
Mid-test Score	Pre-test Score	5.958*	.505	.000
	Post-test Score	-14.017*	.505	.000
Post-test Score	Pre-test Score	19.975*	.505	.000
	Mid-test Score	14.017	.505	.000

*Mean difference significant at $P < .05$

From table 2 the mean difference between the pre-test, mid-test score is significant (Mean difference = -5.958; $P < .05$). This shows that the mid-test mean score is greater than the pre-test mean score. This therefore suggests that there is an improvement in the mid-test scores of subject over the pre-test scores of subjects.

The Table also revealed that the mean difference between the mid-test and the post-test scores is significant (mean difference = -14.017; $P < .05$). This also shows that the mean post-test score is greater than the mean mid-test scores. This indicates that there is an improvement in the post-test score over the mid-test score.

Change in subject's attitudes towards civic issues in pre-mid and post-exposure to participatory research approach

The summary of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) of attitude scores of experimental subjects in the pre-test, mid-test and post-test is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Summary of ANOVA of the Attitude of Experimental Subjects In the Pre-test, Mid-test and Post-test

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	do	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9713.09	2	4856.54	36.75	.000*
Within Groups	43621.58	357	122.19		
Total	53334.66	359			

*Significant at $P < .05$

From Table 3, the difference between the mean attitude scores of subjects across the pre-test, mid-test and post-test is significant [$F(2,357) = 36.75$; $P < .05$]. This implies that the attitude exhibited by the subjects in the pre-test, mid-test and post-test is significantly different.

The multiple comparisons of the pre-test, mid-test and post-test attitude scores were carried out to determine the sources of these differences is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Multiple Comparisons of Pre-test, Mid-test and Post-test Attitude Scores of Subject

(I) Score	(J) Score	Mean Difference	Std-Error	Sig.
Pre-test Score	Mid-test Score	-9.38*	1.427	.000
	Post-test Score	-12.13*	1.427	.000
Mid-test Score	Pre-test Score	9.38*	1.427	.000
	Post-test Score	-2.75	1.427	.158
Post-test Score	Pre-test Score	12.13*	1.427	.000
	Mid-test Score	2.75	1.427	.158

*Mean difference significant at $P < .05$

Table 4 shows that the mean difference between the pre-test and mid-test attitude scores is significant (Mean difference = 9.38; $P < .05$). However, the mean difference between the mid-test and the post-test attitude scores is not significant (mean difference = -2.75; $P > .05$).

This implies that while there is an appreciable improvement in the attitude of subjects from pre-test to mid-test, such improvement could not be found improving from mid-test to post-test.

Summary and conclusion

Perhaps it is important at this stage to revisit, once again, the nature of the participatory model used in this study so as to be able to view the results obtained in their correct perspective. It should be emphasized that the participatory approach adopted was largely exploratory, based on the conceptual framework that students are finally the best analysts of their own problems; and that once properly sensitized to these problems, and given the appropriate facilities (which should include the ability to reasonably view these problems), they could best provide the solutions to them.

Both the qualitative and quantitative results indicated that prior to the development of IEC activities, participants held certain impressions about some key civic issues such as our values, attitude towards cultural diversity, respect for other people, social issues – traffic regulations, attitudes to accident, concept of civic education and sustainable development. This study sought to develop a participatory civic education programme for students in Colleges of Education. Major findings include the fact that there was impact of the civic education programme on students exposed to the programme when compared with those who were not. This is evident by the increase in knowledge base of the students exposed to the programme compared with their counterparts who were not.

The findings of this study would seem to have profound implications for civic education in Nigeria particularly at the College of Education level. This is precisely because civic education is value-laden and, knowledge and attitudes towards civic issues are essential for the success of civic education programme and by extension civic policies.

The results of the study have shown that students' exposure to participatory civic programme lead to some gain or improvement in knowledge and attitudes when compared to those not exposed to participatory civic programme. This indicates that continued implementation of the programme would pave way for the pre-service teachers to develop rational and the right type of attitudes towards civic issues now and in future. In addition to this, the pre-service teachers should be able to adopt participatory approach to inculcate the right type of values and attitudes towards civic issues and to impart the relevant knowledge about the civic to pupils in the primary schools.

In order to have a clear understanding of civic issues, the teaching/learning process should be restructured so as to accommodate 'new' approaches that enhance students' knowledge of the civic issues and to promote favourable attitudes on their part towards the civic issues. The participatory approach, which has proved effective, is hereby recommended for use for sustainable development in Nigeria. The Federal and State governments should popularize and ensure the effective implementation of civic education in all Colleges of Education nationwide by not only providing fund but also monitor.

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