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## CIVIC EDUCATION OR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION? PREFERENCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS FOR VALUE RE-ORIENTATION

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### **Abstract**

*This paper examines social studies teachers' preference for civic education or citizenship education for value re-orientation in Nigeria. The study employed survey research design with 276 Social Studies teachers as the study sample. A 15-item structured questionnaire comprising both demographic information about the respondents as well as information on value re-orientation using civic education or citizenship education was developed and the data obtained from it were analyzed through chi-square analyses. The study revealed a significant difference between school teachers' preference for civic education and citizenship education for value re-orientation. The result also indicated that there was statistically significant difference on the level of satisfaction of primary and junior secondary school teachers on the inclusion of norms and values in Social Studies Curriculum. Consequently, the paper recommends among others urgent value re-orientation programmes via civic education and citizenship education.*

**Key Words:** Civic Training, Citizenship Education, Teachers' Preference, Value Re-orientation.

### **Introduction**

The need to re-engineer the process of inculcating civic or citizenship in our primary and secondary schools has become very obvious in the face of fast dwindling national consciousness, social harmony and patriotic zeal. As far back as the 1980s, it became painfully evident that the lack of civic education and patriotic orientation had led to disorientation in schools and the larger society (Agu, 2010). The consequences were being felt in all spectrum of our society.

Citizenship education or civic education is construed broadly to encompass the preparation of young people for their roles and responsibilities as citizens and, in particular, the role of education (through schooling, teaching and learning) in that preparatory process (Kerr, 1999). Though there were attempts to draw a distinction between citizenship education and civic education as reflected in the comments or works of Kennedy (1997) and McLaughlin (1992), the area of citizenship education is covered by a wide range of terms across different countries and comprises many subjects. These terms include Citizenship, Civics, Social Sciences, Social Studies, World Studies, Society, Studies of Society, Life Skills and Moral Education among others (Kerr, 1999). Ichilov (1998) also explains that young people should be given citizenship education in order to prepare them for the challenges and uncertainties of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Civic education and citizenship education are commonly employed for value orientation and inculcation. It is difficult to build a nation when the nation builders (the citizens) are not manifesting the traits of good citizenship (Falade, 2008). Education in the world over is a veritable instrument for citizenship training. Hence, school subjects are to lay emphasis on truth, justice, fairness, honesty, hard work, and discipline among others. This according to Omotseye (1999) will help to build in the child, right from an early age, dedication and responsible attitude towards work. Thus, there is the need for the educational system to lay emphasis on civics and citizenship training if we are to produce good citizens (Ogundare, 2002).

Civic education is a school subject which studies the way government works and deals with the rights and duties of citizens and members of a particular society. Indeed, citizenship does not only mean membership of a given state, but it also connotes that such a citizen or member is vested with some rights and duties. Civic education or training is a programme that teaches about the political system. It lays emphasis on the rights, duties and obligations of every member of a political system. The purpose of civic training is to develop in the learner those values and skills that will make them responsible citizens. Civic education aims at developing in the citizens the spirit of effective citizenship and loyalty to the nation (Falade, 2008).

One of the most important issues in teaching democratic values for a sustainable society is ensuring that what is considered 'democratic and fairness' is inclusive of all citizens in society. A vibrant civic life in which citizens are engaged in all aspects of society is critical to the flourishing of democratic institutions, and an important precondition for promoting social justice and human rights (Arnot, 2005). Citizens' rights, responsibilities and duties/obligations to society are premised upon individuals, groups and communities having access to and being represented in national political/governmental structures and being able to participate fully in the range of economic, cultural and political structures of decision-making in society. Without such equality, democracies in even many advanced Western European democracies would be considered as "immature" (Arnot, Araújo, Deliyanni-Kouimtzi, Rowe & Tomé, 1996).

In Nigeria, the education of citizens through national citizenship or civic education programmes is now a focus for proper value re-orientation. This is because the national objectives which serve as the foundation for the objectives of the Nigerian National Policy on Education lay credence to the building of: a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society, a united and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (National Policy on Education - NPE, 2004).

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It was in the context of developing long term solutions and addressing the root of value degeneration that necessitated the introduction of Civic Education to Universal Basic Education Curriculum in Nigeria. The goals of Civic Education curriculum is derived from the general philosophy of education in the country which are enshrined in the NPE. Until now, elements of Civic Education (CE) were being taught as part of Social Studies and Citizenship Education (NERDC, 2007).

The contents of the current Civic Education in Nigeria are to develop young Nigerian people into responsible citizens. These include our values; citizenship, national consciousness and national identity; human rights and rule of law; representative democracy; duties and obligations of citizens; Nigerian constitution; social issues; peace and conflicts; national economic life among others (NERDC, 2007). Therefore, knowledge gained in the course of undergoing the various issues are supposed to equip Nigerian youth with the skills to deal with various social and personal issues and afford the learners an appreciation of their rights, duties and obligations as citizens and an appreciation of the rights of the citizens.

In the present day and different to other subjects, Civic Education is not merely and perhaps not even primarily - taught at school, but also imparted outside the schools through political events and discussions (Händle, 2008). Consequently, how countries express their values has a marked influence on their citizenship or civic education. This is why Adetoro and Omiyefa (2010) posited that Nigeria as a nation is value loaded. Therefore, certain societal values according to these scholars that need to be revisited via the school curriculum include: honesty, fairness, forgiveness, orderliness, hard work, fidelity, productivity, efficiency, worth of and respects for persons and so on (p.24).

In a higher philosophical discourse, Kerr (1999) challenged many countries on the answer to a simple question: is citizenship education "value-explicit" or "value-neutral"? Should citizenship education be values-explicit and promote distinct values which are part of a broader nationally accepted system of public values and beliefs? Or should it be 'values-neutral' or 'values-free' and take a

neutral stance to values and controversial issues, leaving the decision on values to the individual? The answer reflects a great deal about a country's approach to citizenship education (Kerr, 1999).

This tension is part of the broader debate about the balance between the 'public' and 'private' dimensions of citizenship, leading to what the education philosopher, McLaughlin (1992) has termed 'thick' and 'thin' citizenship education. Those who view citizenship as a largely 'public' concern see a major or 'thick' role for education (through the school and formal curriculum) in the promotion of citizenship and, in particular for teachers. Those who view citizenship as a largely 'private' affair see a much more limited or 'thin', role for education (largely through the hidden curriculum). They advocate a much stronger role for the family and community organizations than for teachers. Values explicit approaches are commonly criticized for the associated dangers of bias and the indoctrination of students, while 'value-neutral' approaches are attacked for their failure to help students to deal adequately with real-life, controversial issues (Kerr, 1999).

Indeed, political philosophers and commentators argue that citizenship is conceptualized and contested along a continuum, which ranges from a minimal to a maximal interpretation (McLaughlin, 1992).

<b>Minimal</b>		<b>Maximal</b>
Thin	-	Thick
Exclusive	-	Inclusive
Elitist	-	Activist
Civic Education	-	Citizenship Education
Formal	-	Participative
Content led	-	Process led
Knowledge based	-	Value based
Didactic transmission	-	Interactive interpretation
Easier to achieve and measure in practice	-	More difficult to achieve and measure in practice.

*Fig 1: Citizenship Education Continuum (Source: Kerr, 1999)*

Minimal interpretations seek to promote particular exclusive and elitist interests, such as the granting of citizenship to certain groups in society but not all. Minimal Interpretations lead to narrow, formal approaches to citizenship education – what has been termed *Civic Education*. This is largely content-led and knowledge-based and its primary purpose is to inform through the provision and transmission of information. On the other hand, maximal interpretations seek to actively include and involve all groups and interests in society. Maximal interpretations lead to a broad mixture of formal and informal approaches to what has been termed *Citizenship Education*, as opposed to narrower civic education. This citizenship education includes the content and knowledge components of minimal interpretations, but actively encourages investigation and interpretation of many different way in which these components (including the rights and responsibilities of citizens) are determined and carried out. The primary aim is not only to inform, but also to use the information to help students to understand and to enhance their capacity to participate (Kerr, 1999; McLaughlin, 1992).

Regretting the problem of youth incivility and immorality in Nigerian society, Iyamu and Obiunu (2010) advocated for the need to seek both formal and informal approaches to the inculcation of desirable values and civic consciousness in the young people, thus, advocating for citizenship education. Moreover, the incidence of lack of national consciousness and unpatriotic attitudes are prevalent in Nigeria. The consequences are being felt at all strata of our society. The high rate of corruption, dishonesty, indiscipline, disrespect for both elders and the rule of law, ethnic and religious violence, indifference to duty are some of the manifestations of negative attitudes in the Nigeria society. The recent botched bombing of a United States airliner by a young Nigerian is a challenge to national image. These and other issues have thrown up the question of where lies Nigerian value system. It also underscores government's commitment to address the issue of ethics and values as well as the socialization of Nigerian children through civic education and citizenship education. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to critically examine Social Studies teachers' preference for civic education and citizenship education for value re-orientation in Nigeria.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were generated and tested in this study:

- $H_{0_1}$ : There is no significant difference between primary and junior secondary school teachers' preference of civic education and citizenship education for value re-orientation.
- $H_{0_2}$ : There is no significant difference between primary and junior secondary school teachers' level of satisfaction on the inclusion norms and values in Social Studies curriculum.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted survey design to determine Social Studies teachers preference for value re-orientation either via civic education or citizenship education in Ogun state of Nigeria. A total of 276 Social Studies teachers were selected using purposive sampling technique in three local governments of the state. A questionnaire titled 'Value Re-orientation using Civic Education or Citizenship Education (VRCECE)' was developed by the researchers.

The instrument was made up of two sections; the first section requested for personal information from the respondent such as type and nature of school and area of specialization. The second section consisted of 15 structured items to elicit responses from the participants. The instrument was trial tested on 30 teachers in a separate local government. The KR20 formula was used and a reliability of 0.62 was found. The instrument was also examined for content validity with the help of three Social Studies experts. The researchers personally administered the questionnaires after briefing the teachers on the nature of civic education and citizenship education. Chi-square statistic was used to test the two null hypotheses that were generated.

### **Results**

$H_{0_1}$ : There is no significant difference between primary and junior secondary school Social Studies teachers' preference for civic education and citizenship education for value re-orientation.

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**Table 1: Chi-Square Analysis showing Social Studies Teachers' Preference for Value Re-orientation in Nigeria**

Categories	Civic Education	Citizenship Education	Df	$\chi^2$ calculated	$\chi^2$ critical	Decision
Primary School Teachers	214 (173.66)	170 (210.34)	1	34.63	3.84	Significant
Junior Secondary School Teachers	141 (181.34)	260 (219.66)				

$\chi^2$ calculated (34.63) >  $\chi^2$ critical (3.84) :  $p < 0.05$

From the table 1, there was a statistically significant difference in the preference of primary and junior secondary school Social Studies teachers on civic education or citizenship education for value re-orientation. This is because the chi square calculated value of 34.63 is considerably greater than the critical value of 3.84. Therefore, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. By implication, the primary and junior secondary school teachers differently prefer either civic education or citizenship education for value re-orientation. School teachers prefer citizenship education for value orientation more than civic education for the same purpose.

**HO<sub>2</sub>**: There is no significant difference between primary and junior secondary school Social Studies teachers' level of satisfaction of inclusion of norms and values in Social Studies curriculum.

**Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis Showing Social Studies Teachers' Level of Satisfaction of Inclusion of Norms and Values in Social Studies Curriculum**

Categories	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Df	$\chi^2$ calculated	$\chi^2$ critical	Decision
Primary School Teachers	52 (58.09)	91 (99.30)	30 (24.62)	2	11.22	5.99	Significant
Junior Secondary School Teachers	10 (2.91)	30 (21.70)	0 (5.38)				

$\chi^2$ calculated (11.22) >  $\chi^2$ critical (5.99) :  $p < 0.05$



Results in table 2 showed that the chi square critical value of 5.99 is less than the calculated value of 11.22. Therefore, the null hypothesis is thus rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between primary and junior secondary school Social Studies teachers' level of satisfaction of the inclusion of norms and values in Social Studies curriculum. This suggests that primary and junior secondary school teachers are differently satisfied with the inclusion of norms and values in Social Studies curriculum.

### **Discussion of Results**

The study has shown that Social Studies teachers in Nigeria prefer citizenship education more than civic education for teaching norms and values. This supports Arnot (2005) and Beck (1998) submissions that civic/citizenship education with regards to both the education of citizens and the education for citizenship represents a vitally important core to the educational system and its social purposes. But citizenship education is, however, a broader discipline covering citizenship, civics, values and moral education among others (Kennedy, 1997; McLaughlin, 1992).

The study also revealed that primary and junior secondary school teachers are not equally satisfied with the level of inclusion of norms and values in Social Studies curriculum. This finding contradicts the assertion of Ehman, Mehlinger and Patrick (1974) as quoted by Adetoro and Omiyefa (2010) that Social Studies classroom are places in which students (and teachers) should be able to re-examine and perhaps change ungrounded beliefs and values otherwise what goes on in those classrooms seems to be of little value. Remarkably, Agu (2010) advocates the need to re-engineer the process of inculcating civics or citizenship education in our primary and secondary schools in the face of fast dwindling national consciousness, human values and societal norms and attitudes.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Civic education or citizenship education by their nature are value loaded school subject. Hence, the subjects concentrate on social attitudes, human values, truth and justice. This helps to build in the

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child, right from an early age, dedication and responsible attitude towards work. Thus, to produce good and responsive citizens, there is the need for the educational system to lay emphasis on civic training and citizenship education (Falade, 2008; Ogundare, 2002 and Omotseye, 1999).

Indeed, very firm conclusions can be drawn from the results of this study. The results are however indicative of the fact that civic education and citizenship education are identified as important school subject for teaching norms and values. On a broader note however, Social Studies is seen as an umbrella subject encompassing civic education and citizenship education for the inculcation of norms and values. Social values and civic consciousness of youth are capable of being influenced positively through civic and citizenship education programmes.

Consequently, our concern today therefore, should be to fill gaps by exposing the youth to appropriate learning experiences and activities that can help to raise their civic consciousness and develop appropriate social values and attitudes for effective relationship in the society. Concerted efforts have to be made by religious groups, organizations and non-governmental organizations to create forums for young people to gain awareness and understanding of certain desirable values and social attitudes needed for effective living (Iyamu and Obiunu, 2010).

There should be urgent value re-orientation because of their far reaching impact on national development. To this end, teachers are very critical to the success of this bold initiative. Theirs is to inculcate the right kind of values through effective teaching of civics or citizenship education. Thus, stakeholders should organize capacity building programmes for teachers at all levels for the sustainability and promotion of civic education or citizenship education via Social Studies Curriculum.

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