
TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF CIVIC LEARNING AS INSTRUMENT FOR ACHIEVING NATIONAL ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY IN OGUN STATE

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Abstract

Civic learning can be seen as value laden activities that can equip citizens to be active in the democratic process, in order to achieve good governance in a given society. *The purpose of this paper is to examine teachers' assessment of civic learning as instrument for achieving National Economic Empowerment and Development strategy (NEEDS) in Ogun state. The population of the study consists of 2899 social studies teachers at the secondary schools level in Ogun state, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 365 social studies teachers for the study. The response to the questionnaire items were used to answer research questions and test the formulated hypotheses. The result of the study indicates that civic learning is yet to be inculcated in people and also lacks fully qualified teachers in our schools. Also, more than half of the sampled populations tend to have positive ratings of the adequacy of their knowledge of civic learning as instruments for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state. It was also discovered that, there is a significant difference between teachers' qualification and the assessment of civic learning as an instrument for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state. Based on the findings, it is recommended among other things, that, the stakeholders in Social Studies*

should create awareness on the teaching of civic learning through seminars, conferences and workshops.

Keywords: Civic learning, Empowerment Economic, Instrument, Assessment.

Background to the study

Nigeria as a nation, has several development plans which have been implemented since independence, but unfortunately not many youths have benefited from these: Nigerian society is highly stratified by socio-economic differentials. The majority in the society belong to the youth group. National development implies that a society has laid down standard and values that it cherishes: these include, justice, equity, honesty and integrity, freedom of expression and religion and economic right for all including the youths, equal opportunity and a caring human environment (Ijeoma, 2007); but these have not seen to be so. In this context, youth empowerment is one area that has remained a big challenge Nigeria had to face. In recent times, youth restiveness in our society has been linked to unemployment rate. The search for white-collar jobs by many graduates at all levels has not yielded positive result, as our existing industries which have been the major employers of labour are no longer functioning up to expectation to absorb more of the teeming youths. Some are folded up due to one challenge or the other, thereby laying off more of the youths in the labour market and depriving them of the much needed source of sustainable living.

In Nigeria, several Youth Empowerment Programmes have been put in place by different leaders and governments in order to channel economic strength and strategies towards productive ventures which lead to self-reliance and poverty reduction, especially for our youths who are the most vibrant and vulnerable groups. Some of the laudable programmes, as Bwai and Gomper (2014) reflected, include: The Agricultural Development Project (ADP) in 1975, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1975, the Green Revolution in 1980, Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) in 1977 more recently, the following are some measures towards Poverty Alleviation such as Universal Basic Education (UBE)

in 2000, National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 2001, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) in 2003 and the youths enterprise with innovation “you win in 2011 and subsidy re-investment and empowerment programme (Sure-P), Programmes of president Goodluck Jonathan’s administration, among several others.

Civic learning is the process by which a public is made aware of social and political right and responsibilities as well as principles and practices of action. Civic learning is intended to build and heighten awareness of the gaps between law and practice. It can provide a link between education and action, empowering actions with the tools, skills and attitude necessary to influence change, strengthening the citizen’s movement and influence. Civic learning is therefore the knowledge, information, aspiration, expectation a nation gives to its citizens to know their rights and duties. Sunday (2005) sees civic learning as the type of training that makes it possible for one to know and appreciate his/her fundamental rights and social justice. It also involves the understanding of the nation’s constitutions to enable one participate fully in the democratic process. Danladi (2010) posited that civic learning is a guide by some policies that can redirect citizens private and public lives while Arostar (2009) sees civic learning as an instrument of change that will help Nigeria achieve the goals of national consciousness and unity, the right types of values and attitude for survival and competence need for the citizens to live and contribute to the development of Nigeria.

Civic learning has been defined by different authors: It is to teach citizens of country so that they will be aware of the happenings in the society. By this, civic learning is seen as field of study that focuses on humans, his/her community, government and governance. Onyewenu and Olosan (2002) in Arostar (2009) opined that civic learning, as part of civic education, is the status enjoyed by national’s of a country which entitles it to full legal economic, social and political right at the same time obliged to defend the country whenever called upon to do so.

National Economic and Development Strategy (NEEDS) was instituted by the government in March 2004 as a working

framework for the reform of Nigeria's socio-political and economic structure. It aims to promote macro-economic stability through transparent, rule-based and sound physical, monetary and foreign exchange policies, improve public sector efficiency and transparency and promote private sector development by upgrading infrastructure and to reform the financial sector. As indicated above, Nigeria's case for debt relief was strengthened by the introduction of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). Since its inception, NEEDS implementation has been monitored quarterly by the IMF on the invitation of the government, in order to give the international community an objective assessment. Progress recorded under (NEEDS) are in the areas of anti-corruption, due process transparency and prudence in overall government,

Bwai and Gomper (2014) noted that empirical records of many of these programmes and projects are not impressive enough to bring about the empowerment of youths for better living. The policies and implementation strategies of these programmes are what are lacking. Many more things should have been put in place by these laudable programmes but these have been hampered due to a lot of indiscipline, dearth of nationalistic spirit, lawlessness and lots of its much cherished sense of nationhood, cultural identity, hospitable spirit and the prevalent trend of corruption, political thuggery, terrorism, disrespect for elders and constituted authority and rule of law are some of the manifestations of negative value in the Nigerian society. This, according to Arosa (2010), called for urgent value re-orientation through the instrument of civic learning process that may bring more achievement under the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS).

Objectives of the study

The objects of the study are to:

1. Assess teacher's use of civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state
2. Find out if the teachers have adequate knowledge on the use of civic learning as instrument in achieving NEEDS in Ogun state.

Research Questions

1. What is the teacher's assessment of civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state?
2. Do the teacher's have adequate knowledge of the civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state?

Null Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between teachers' qualification and their knowledge of assessment of civic learning for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state.

Method

The study employs the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consist of all the 2899 social studies teachers in Upper Basic Education Level Schools in 7 local government areas of Ogun state. They are Odeda, Abeokuta South and North, Egba Owode, Yewa South and North and Ifo Local Government area of Ogun state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 4 local governments. They are: Odeda, Egba Owode, Abeokuta South and North Local Government Area of Ogun state. The proportional method was used to choose 365 social studies teachers from the sample size as follows: 53 from Odeda, 115 from Abeokuta South, 69 from Abeokuta North and 128 from Egba Owode local government. Questionnaire was used to elicit responses from teachers. The responses were used to answer research questions and test null hypothesis, respectively. The research questions were analyzed by using percentage, mean and standard deviation. The chi-square test of significance was used to test the null hypothesis.

Data presentation, analysis, interpretation result and discussion

Answering Research Question 1: What is the assessment of teacher's use of civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state?

The assessment rating of the respondents' displays 54.03% for "Strong Assessment" on teachers' assessment of civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS. The interpretation here is that, 54.03% of teachers are competent in the teaching of civic learning through Social Studies to achieve NEEDS. Another 42.85% endorsed "Agreement". The remaining 2.08% and 1.04% endorsed "Disagreement and Strong Disagreement", respectively. This finding is not surprising because some secondary schools teachers are not specialise in social studies. Many empirical studies carried out by Adediran, Lijadu and Sobola (2012), Danladi, (2010), Ijeoma (2007) and Okam (2009) had alluded to the high limited professional competent of many social studies teachers in our schools and colleges.

Answering research question 2: Do the teachers have adequate knowledge of civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state?

The respondents displayed the percentage of "Strongly Agreement" to be 73.32%, regarding the adequacy of their knowledge on civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS. 23.30% of the respondents demonstrated "Agreement" whereas, 3.67% and 0.71% of the responses showed "Disagreement and Strongly disagreement" respectively. The interpretation is that more than half of the sample population tends to have positive rating of the adequacy of their knowledge on civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS.

This finding is in line with the empirical discoveries of Social Studies curricularists, such as Mezieobi (2009), Danladi (2010), Arosta (2010), Mohammed (2010) and Okam (2009) who discovered that the crop of non-professional social studies teachers lack requisite professional knowledge, skills and competence needed for instilling civic learning in the people.

Testing of null-hypothesis

NO: There is no significant difference between teacher's qualification and their knowledge of civic learning for achieving NEEDS in Ogun state.

Table 3: X² test table showing teacher's qualifications and their knowledge of assessment of civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS.

X² Cal **X² tab** **df** **Decision** 161.95 21.03 12 P < 0.05

X ² Cal	X ² tab	df	Decision
161.95	21.03	12	P < 0.05

Decision rule: Reject Ho if X² calculated > X² critical, accept if otherwise. Decision: since 161.95 > 21.03 the null-hypothesis is being rejected, and the alternative-hypothesis is being accepted. There is a significant difference between teacher's qualification and their knowledge of civic learning for achieving NEEDS. These findings are consistent with those of Mezeobi (1992) and Arosta (2003).

Conclusion

The use of civic learning as instrument for achieving NEEDS will help the nation to alleviate poverty among people in the society and more so will bring a way of making the economic sector of this country to be buoyant. The fact remain that civic learning hammered on moral values, attitude in which when applied in human behavior exact and refine life and bring into accord with standard of conduct that are accepted and approved in democratic culture.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

1. Government, through National Orientation Agency (NOA) and other public media should inculcate the right kind of attitudes and values, skills etc desired to reawaken the political process through the effective learning and teaching of civic learning in schools.
2. Civic learning centres should be built in different communities, where the people will have the chance of participating in civic programmes through seminar and conferences organized by resource persons on a regular basis for the purpose of public enlightenment.

- 3 Civic learning should be emphasized in our school as well as encouraging them to pay attention to teaching methods, like simulations, dramatization, and role play, among others, to press home the idea of economic empowerment.

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