



## Teachers' and Students' Perception Ofciviceducation as an Effective Means of Citizenship Training

### KEYWORDS

Education, inclusive schools, special needs students, Civic Education, Citizenry, Citizenship training and perception.

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**ABSTRACT** *The study investigated Teachers' and Students' perception of Civic Education as an effective means of citizenship training. The descriptive survey was carried out in the 5 capital cities in the South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Three research questions and three null-hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study consisted of all the JSS students and civic education teachers in all the inclusive public secondary schools in the capital cities in South-East zone. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw 4 schools from each state capital, which gives total number of 20 schools out of the 198 inclusive public secondary schools in the capital cities. Furthermore, random sampling technique was used to draw 20 JSS 3 students from each sample school, making it four hundred (400) students. All the 30 civic education teachers in the sampled schools were involved in the study. The number of research subjects used for the study is four hundred and thirty (430). A questionnaire titled "Civic Education as an Effective means of Citizenship Training questionnaire (CEEMCTQ)" was developed by the researchers and was face validated by 3 experts in education, in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Data were analyzed using means and standard deviation to answer the three research questions while t-test statistics was used to test the null-hypotheses. The study revealed among others that, the identified political, social and economic values in a multi-ethnic nation like Nigeria could be improved through civic education. The study concluded that proper implementation of civic education curriculum will engender training of citizens that can contribute meaningfully toward nation-building. The study recommends that, all the stake holders in education industry should ensure that civic education curriculum is effectively implemented for realization of its lofty goals.*

### Introduction

Ideally, every state of the World expects her citizens to behave in conformity with the state norms, values, and aspirations so as to protect the ideals of the society and promote national development. Having young people who are well informed, responsible, good and well behaved is the desire of every nation. To guarantee this expectation, there is every need that the citizens should be groomed to attain the standard of behavior desired by the society for protection of its values and promotion of national development. This informs the need for citizenship training.

Citizenship is a position or status of being a citizen with all the rights associated with it (Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajilaye, Abdulrahman & Anyaocha, 2009). It is a concept used to ascertain the status of individual who possesses full political and legal rights in a state and who contributes to national development. Civic education is of paramount importance for the training of effective citizens. Civic education is a deliberate effort made by the authority to impart on members of the state certain knowledge, facts, skills, abilities, societal values norms and attitude necessary for an active and useful life in building a dynamic and great nation (Ukegbu et al 2009).

Acknowledging the importance of civic education, the colonial government introduced it in the Nigerian education system so as to help eradicate low level of civic responsibilities among Nigeria populace. However, the abolition of civic education in our school system by the national political leaders has led to disorientation of national core-values in schools and different sectors of our society. Con-

sidering the socio-political condition of Nigeria in recent time, the Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the National Council of Education (NCE) and Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) made conscientious effort to re-establish civic education curriculum in our school system. Consequently, the Federal government of Nigeria in 2009 directed that the teaching of civic education should be re-introduced in schools. It was first introduced in the Basic Education levels and was later introduced in senior secondary schools in 2011 (Adenipekun 2010). In the year 2012 civic education was made a core subject in the senior secondary schools in Nigeria. Today civic education is one of the compulsory cross cutting subjects that all students irrespective of their field of study are to take. Now that it has been made a curricular subject in senior secondary school, it is believed that if the curriculum is effectively implemented, the goals of achieving effective citizens will be guaranteed. This collaborates with the views of the National Orientation Agency (NOA 2006), which states that the main philosophy behind the teaching and learning of civic education curriculum in Nigerian schools is the production of effective citizens and forging a cohesive society. Similarly, Wahab (2011) and Ganuyu (2011) maintain that civic education aids effective democratic process. This entails that the recipients of civic education will in no doubt acquire desirable habits, attitudes and values that are needed for true democracy which in turn accelerate national development. It is against this background that researchers aimed at investigating the views of teachers and students on the efficacy of civic education curriculum, in providing citizenship training.

Civic Education has laudable objectives. Ukegbu et al (2009) outlined the objectives of civic education in Nigeria: developing and transforming the Nigerian youths into effective and responsible citizens by making them law abiding and promoting social and political awareness, thereby enabling them to appreciate, discuss and contribute to the transformation of their immediate environment and the country in general. A close look at the objectives of civic education reveals its importance in citizenship training.

Citizenship training is that type of education given to citizens for the purpose of transforming them into good citizens. Ikumelu (1994) defines it as the type of orientation that transforms a person into an effective and efficient citizen. Ezegebe, (1998), discusses citizenship training as the education which enables the individual to know his or her rights, privileges, duties and/or responsibilities as a good citizen and make positive contributions to the society. Citizenship training is concerned with inculcating in the individual the basic knowledge, skills and values required for becoming socially aware of the rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities of a good citizen of the State (Ogbe, 2011). It could be referred to as the organized content, and/or program which makes individuals to become conscious of their responsibilities and obligations to self, fellow human beings and the larger society.

The aim of citizenship education is to inculcate in a citizen the right kind of values that will help him participate effectively in national development. It equally aims at inculcating through practical exercises such qualities as public spiritedness, voluntary services, sense of fair play, honesty and self-sacrifice for good of others (Ibezim, 2001). Citizenship training via civic education is considered a viable tool for producing effective, efficient, functional, patriotic and useful citizens who can contribute to national development.

Based on the fore-going, the purpose of this study is to find out teachers' and students' perception of civic education as an effective means for citizenship training. Perception according to Hornby (2001) is the ability of individuals to understand the true nature of a phenomenon or event. Perception in the context of this work has to do with how people interpret a phenomena or events. Teachers and students used in the study was justified by the fact that they are directly involved in the teaching and learning of the subject under study hence, they are in a position to understand the nature of civic education in citizenship training. Therefore, the researchers aimed at finding out from the teachers and students their perception of the role of civic education as an effective means of citizenship training. The findings of this study will be of high importance to the entire society, hence, it will be of help for the restoration of peace in homes, communities and the nation, since the ideals that guarantee peace and orderliness are taught in civic education.

### Research Question

To carry out the study, the following research questions were formulated.

1. What are the roles of civic education in the political life of the citizenry?
2. What are the roles of civic education in the social life of the citizenry?
3. What are the roles of civic education in the economic life of the citizenry?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study.

**H01:** There is no significant difference in the mean perception of teachers and students on the roles of civic education in the political life of the citizenry.

**H02:** There is no significant difference in the mean perception of teachers and students on the role of civic education in the social life of the citizenry.

**H03:** There is no significant difference in the mean perception of teachers and students on the role of civic education in the economic life of the citizenry.

### Method

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. This research design was chosen because it facilitates description of situations as they exist in their natural settings (Nworgu, 2006). The choice of the design was informed by the fact that the study aimed at gathering information from the research subjects on the role of civic education as an effective means of citizenship training in South East Nigeria. This design is concerned with the present and tries to determine the status of the phenomenon under study, hence, it was considered appropriate by the researchers.

### Population and sample

The population of the study included all the JSS3 students in one hundred and ninety-eight (198) public secondary schools in the five capital cities in south-east Nigeria for the 2013/2014 session and two hundred and sixty-one (261) civic education teachers in the same public secondary schools. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw four secondary schools from each capital city giving a total of 20 secondary schools. Furthermore, 20 students were drawn from each of the sampled schools giving a total of 400 students. All the 30 civic education teachers in the sampled schools were used for the study. The reason for using all the teachers is that the number is manageable. In all a total of four hundred and thirty (430) research subjects was used for the study.

### Instrument for data collection

Structured questionnaire titled "Civic Education as an Effective Means of Citizenship Training Questionnaire (CEEMCTQ)" was developed by the researchers and used to collect data. The instrument consists of sections 'A' and 'B'. Section 'A' sought information on the personal data of the respondents, while section 'B' sought for information on issues raised in the research questions and hypotheses. The 30 items in the questionnaire were grouped into three clusters. Cluster 1, is made up of twelve items which sought information on the role of civic education on political life of the citizenry, cluster 2, consisted of eleven items and it sought information on the role of civic education in social life of the citizenry while cluster 3, consisted of seven items which sought information from the respondents on the role of civic education on the economic life of the citizenry. Responses to the items was on a four point rating scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) which was weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively in Likert tradition.

### Validation of the instrument

The structured questionnaire, CEEMCTQ, was face validated by five experts, three from the Department of Social Science Education and two from Science Education Department (measurement and evaluation), all in the Universi-

ty of Nigeria, Nsukka. During the validation exercise, some items were restructured, some were discarded while some new items were added.

**Method of data collection**

The assistance of 10 trained research assistants was solicited for in the administration of the questionnaire. To ensure maximum return, the instrument was administered and retrieved same day.

**Data analysis**

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analyzing the data. Data collected were analyzed using means

and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the null-hypotheses. The decision rule for the acceptance value was 2.50 and above, while any item with mean below 2.50 was considered not accepted. For the null-hypotheses, reject when t-cal is higher than t-crit. On the other hand, do not reject when t-cal is less than t-crit.

**Results**

Answers to research questions were presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3 below while the results of the null hypotheses were presented in Tables 4, 5 and 6 below following.

**Table 1: Mean perceptions of teachers and students on the role of civic education on political life of the citizenry**

S/No	Item	Teachers		Dec	Students		Dec	Summary	Dec
		X <sub>1</sub>	SD <sub>1</sub>		X <sub>2</sub>	SD <sub>2</sub>			
1	Political loyalty is acquired in Civic Education.	3.23	.97	A	3.06	1.17	A	3.15	A
2	Knowledge of ideals of democracy is acquired in Civic Education.	3.03	.96	A	3.11	1.12	A	3.07	A
3	Nationalism and patriotism are learnt through Civic Education.	3.43	.77	A	3.78	.42	SA	3.61	SA
4	Civic virtues and political qualities that make good and responsible citizens are part of civic education curriculum	3.43	.94	A	3.23	.96	A	3.33	A
5	Civic Education inculcates the dangers of political apathy on citizens.	2.83	1.09	A	3.06	.74	A	2.95	A
6	Through civic education the importance of political participation is learnt	3.73	.64	SA	3.08	.96	A	3.41	A
7	Through civic education students gain knowledge of government of the State in which they live and its functions	3.23	.97	A	3.03	1.12	A	3.13	A
8	Fundamental human rights and the rule of law are important aspects of civic education that help the youths to carry out their roles as good citizens.	3.53	.63	SA	2.60	1.43	A	3.07	A
9	Virtues acquired through civic education have the capacity to aid effective democratic process.	3.20	.89	A	3.50	.78	SA	3.35	A
10	Civic Education helps the production of good and effective citizens that can support nation building.	3.17	.79	A	3.70	.60	SA	3.44	A
11	Struggle for leadership through any means is a virtue that is learnt in civic education	1.77	.97	D	1.76	.44	D	1.77	D
12	Ethnic loyalty over national loyalty is learnt via civic education	1.50	.86	SD	1.41	.55	SD	1.46	SD
	GrandTotal	3.01.95		SA	2.94.85		A	2.98	A

The findings from Table 1, reveals that civic education teachers and students, didnot perceive struggle for leadership through any means and ethnic loyalty over national loyalty via civic education (items 11 and 12), as political virtue that could be learnt through civic education. On the other hand the two groups of respondent identified all

other items (1-10) as political virtues that could be learnt through civic education. The grand mean scores of items 1-10 are 3.15, 3.07, 3.61, 3.33, 3.95, 3.41, 3.13, 3.07, 3.35 and 3.44 respectively, while the mean scores of items 11 and 12 are 1.77 and 1.46 respectively. The items on table 1 have grand mean of 2.98.

**Table 2: Mean perceptions of teachers and students on the role of civic education on social life of the citizenry**

S/No	Items	Teachers		Dec.	Students		Dec.	Summary	Dec.
		X <sub>1</sub>	SD <sub>1</sub>		X <sub>2</sub>	SD <sub>2</sub>			
13	Co-operation and selflessness virtues are learnt via civic education curriculum	3.21	.97	A	3.21	.98	A	3.21	A
14	Civic education inculcates tolerance in the lives of the citizens	3.40	.63	A	3.40	.63	A	3.40	A
15	Unity in diversity is one of the virtues civic education inculcates	3.07	.96	A	3.07	.96	A	3.96	SA
16	Honesty in human relationship is learnt via civic education	2.97	.97	A	2.97	.97	A	2.97	A

17	Disciplined behaviour is acquired in Civic Education	3.19	.99	A	3.20	.99	A	3.19	A
18	Courage in handling social issues is learnt in civic education	3.38	.89	A	3.38	.89	A	3.38	A
19	Civic education instills in the citizens attribute of integrity in social interaction	3.71	.55	SA	3.71	.55	SA	3.71	SA
20	Knowledge of contentment as it concerns social interaction is acquired through civic education	3.41	.72	A	3.41	.72	A	3.41	A
21	Good attitude to work is learnt through civic education	3.35	.80	A	3.35	.80	A	3.35	A
22	Unconstructive criticism of leaders is a virtue learnt through civic education	1.53	.54	D	1.53	.54	D	1.53	D
23	Ethnocentric interest is inculcated in civic education	1.95	.38	D	1.95	.38	D	1.95	D
	Grand Total	3.02	.76	A	3.01	.76	A	3.01	A

The findings from table 2, shows that civic education teachers and students disagreed that unconstructive criticisms of leaders and ethnocentric interest of people (items 22 and 23), are virtues that could be learnt via civic education. However, they perceived other identified roles of civic education on the social lives of the citizenry in (items 13-21),

as virtues for effective citizenship training. The grand mean scores of items 13-21 are: 3.21, 3.40, 3.96, 3.97, 3.19, 3.38, 3.71, 3.41 and 3.35 respectively, while the mean scores of items 22 and 23 are 1.53 and 1.95 respectively. The items on table 2 have grand mean of 3.01.

**Table 3: Mean perceptions of teachers and students on the role of civic education on economic life of the citizenry**

S/No	Items	Teachers		Deci	Students		Deci	Summary	Deci
		X <sub>1</sub>	SD <sub>1</sub>		X <sub>2</sub>	SD <sub>2</sub>			
24	Self-reliance towards economic growth is learnt in Civic Education	3.40	.72	A	3.50	.86	SA	3.45	A
25	Skill acquisition for self-employment is learnt in Civic Education	3.03	1.03	A	3.31	.85	A	3.17	A
26	Principles for business success is learnt from Civic Education	3.40	.67	A	3.27	.98	A	3.34	A
27	Economic extortion is inculcated in civic education	1.93	.74	D	1.42	.55	SD	1.68	D
28	Roles of citizens in economic development is inculcated via Civic Education	3.67	.7	SA	3.13	1.05	A	3.40	A
29	Self aggrandizement is learnt via civic education curriculum	2.03	.67	D	1.71	.59	D	1.87	D
30	Materialism is learnt through civic education	2.07	.74	D	1.49	.65	SD	1.78	D
	Grand Total	2.79	.76	A	2.55	.79	A	2.67	A

The findings from table 3, indicates that civic education teachers and students, disagreed that economic extortion, self aggrandizement and materialism (items 27, 29 and 30), are virtue that could be learnt via civic education. However, they perceived all other identified items (items 24, 25, 26 and 28), as effective means of citizenship training via civic education. The grand mean scores of items 24-26 and 28 are: 3.45, 3.17, 3.34 and 3.40 respectively, while the mean scores of items 27, 29 and 30 are: 1.68, 1.87 and 1.78 respectively. The items on table 3 have grand mean of 2.67.

**Table 4: t-test analysis of the mean perceptions of teachers and students on the role of civic education in the political life of citizenry**

Teacher/Student	n	Mean (x)	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Teacher	30	3.01	.95	428	0.40	1.96	Do not reject H <sub>0</sub>
Student	400	2.94	.85				

The result from Table 4 shows that the t-cal obtained is 0.40. From the result it means that t-cal is lower than t-crit of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for 428 degrees of freedom. Since the t-test value of 0.40 is less than t-crit of 1.96, the null-hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

**Table 5: t-test analysis of the mean perceptions of teachers and students on the role of civic education in the social life of citizenry**

Teacher/Student	n	Mean (x)	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Teacher	30	3.02	.76	428	0.07	1.96	Do not reject H <sub>0</sub>
Student	400	3.01	.76				

The result from Table 5 shows that the t-cal obtained is 0.07. From the result it means that t-

cal is lower than t-crit of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for 428 degrees of freedom. Since the t-test value of 0.07 is less than t-crit of 1.96, the null-hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

**Table 6: t-test analysis of the mean perceptions of teachers and students on the role of civic education in the social life of citizenry**

Teacher/Student	n	Mean (x)	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Dec
Teacher	30	2.79	.76	428	1.67	1.96	Do not reject
Student	400	2.55	.79				

The result from Table 6 shows that the t-cal obtained is 1.67. From the result it means that t-

cal is lower than t-crit of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for 428 degrees of freedom. Since the t-test value of 1.67 is less than t-crit of 1.96, the null-hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

### Discussion

The study revealed generally that both the recipients and facilitators (teachers) of civic education agreed that civic education is an effective means of citizenship training. They all agreed that civic education can effectively inculcate in the citizenry Political loyalty, knowledge of ideals of democracy, nationalism and patriotism, civic virtues and qualities that make individuals responsible citizens. They all disagree that civic education cannot inculcate such virtues such as: struggle through any foul means to get at leadership position. Equally it does not inculcate ethnic loyalty over national loyalty on the citizens. This supports the view of the National Orientation Agency (2006) which states that, the main philosophy behind the teaching and learning of civic education is the production of effective citizens and forging a cohesive society. Civic education is a means of healing the ills of society by enhancing the training of the citizens to productive and functional members of the society.

On the role of civic education in social life of the citizens, the two groups of respondents agreed that civic education is capable of inculcating in the citizens the following virtues: co-operation and selflessness, tolerance, unity in diversity, honesty in human relationship, disciplined behaviour, courage in handling social issues, integrity in social interaction and contentment among others. On the other hand, the study documents that civic education does not inculcate in the citizenry the knowledge of unconstructive criticism of leaders and it does not also inculcate the virtue of ethnic interests on the citizens. This suggests that civic education is designed to inculcate in the citizens social democratic values that would enable citizens survive in a multi ethnic state like Nigeria.

The findings of the study also indicate that civic education helps in economic training of

the citizens. The findings show that citizens through civic education could acquire certain economic skills necessary for survival and promotion of the growth of the economy towards national development. Such training as identified by the study include: self-reliance skill acquisition, skill acquisition skills for self employment, principles for business success and roles of citizens in economic development. These virtues are in line with what Chike-Obi (2012) referred to as sustainable life styles. However, civic education according to the findings of the study does not inculcate spirit of self aggrandizement and materialistic tendencies on the citizens.

The result of hypotheses 1,2 and 3 in tables 4,5 and 6 revealed no significant difference in the mean ratings of teachers and students on the role of civic education in the political, social and economic life of Nigerian citizens. Since the t-test value of the two groups revealed no significant difference in their mean ratings on the role of civic education in the political, social and economic life of citizens, the null-hypotheses of no significant difference were therefore, not rejected. The result of the three hypotheses however, revealed that both the teachers and the students shared identical perception on the issues raised in the questionnaire.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings, the study concludes that proper implementation of civic education curriculum will engender training of citizens that can contribute meaningfully toward Nation-building.

Secondly, civic education by virtues of its content would help the students to acquire good democratic values that will help them to function effectively in political, social and economic spheres of life. On this basis, the study recommends that, all the stakeholders in education industry should ensure that civic education curriculum is effectively implemented for maximization of its lofty goals. Again, since civic education curriculum is paramount for eradicating negative values and the low level of civic responsibilities, there is need for mounting non-formal civic education programmes for entire community in all works of life.

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