



## Civic Education: Implementation Challenges of Curriculum Content in Rivers State

### KEYWORDS

itace, ceiq civic education, curriculum content,

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**ABSTRACT** *This study focused on the challenges of implementation of civic education curriculum in Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation as the statistical technique while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level and the degree of freedom was 908. The result of the findings revealed that lecture method, concept mapping, and the negative roles demonstrated by teachers, hindered the implementation of civic education in the classroom. There is a significance difference between teacher's opinion on teaching methods and non-availability of instructional aids that challenge the implementation of the civic education curriculum. Detailed results are tabled and useful recommendations made.*

### Introduction

The world over have long had interest in the ways in which her young ones are prepared for citizenship and in how they learn to take part in civic life. Civic education has become an increasingly important means to educate citizens about their rights, duties and responsibilities. The idea of the introduction of civic education in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria was borne immediately after her independence in 1960 to create the needed awareness of their person and to develop love for their country. To achieve this, the government later introduced the course 'Citizenship Education' in our universities, colleges of education and polytechnics in the year 1992.

Nigeria being the largest population in Africa, need to encourage the different cultures, religious, people with different geographical and political backgrounds to support the unity of the country. This is necessary in order to achieve the principle of one nation, one people and one destiny. Different regimes (governments) in Nigeria have made several efforts to inculcate patriotism and national consciousness in the minds of the people but they have achieved little success. Therefore, the federal government thought it wise to introduce this course, civic education at the lowest level in primary and secondary education. This was done through the Nigerian educational research and development council (NERDC). The aim was to teach our children national consciousness and love for our country at their tender age. The word 'Civic' is a Greek word which simply means citizens of a city or an area.

Curriculum is a systematic and intended packaging of competencies i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes, they are underpinned by values and learners should acquire these values through organized learning experiences both in formal and informal settings.

Good curriculum plays an important role in forging life-long learning competencies, social attitudes and skills such as tolerance and respect, peaceful conflict management, promotion and respect of human rights, gender equality and social justice.

Besides, it also contributes to thinking skills, creativity and

acquisition of relevant knowledge that is applicable to their daily life and careers.

Education has remained a social process in capacity building and maintenance of society for decades. It is a weapon for acquiring skills, relevant knowledge and habits for surviving the changing world Adepaju and Fabiyi, (2008). At the basic education level, the intent of education is specifically to:

- Develop in the entire citizenry, a strong conscientiousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion and
- Ensure acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative, and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for laying a solid foundation for the life long living (Universal Basic Education Guidelines, 1999).

The education sought for in civics remains an important means of teaching the populace about individual right and what duties and responsibilities the governed and leaders should do. The reintroduction of civic education as a subject to be taught in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria is expected to further deepen democratic culture and encourage qualitative participation of the average Nigerian in the governance process. Teachers are very crucial to the success of this bold initiative. This arguably, would create a change of attitude among learners and adequately reform the Nigerian child.

Furthermore, the philosophy and goals of education in Nigeria is that education is an instrument par excellence for national development; hence the formulation of ideas, integration for national development and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education. To this end, education fosters the worth and development of the individual, for each individual sake and for the general development of the society (FRN, 2004).

With respect to child education the document further explained that every Nigerian child shall have a right to equal educational opportunity, irrespective of any real

or imagined disabilities each according to his or her ability (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004:8). The national goals of education which is derived from the philosophy of education, with respect to the quality of instruction in schools at all levels, emphasized:

1. Moral and spiritual principle in inter personal and human relations
2. Shared responsibility for the common good of society and
3. Promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children and acquisition of competences necessary for self-reliance (FRN, 2004:9).

A comparison of the attainment of the expectation for a virile, peaceful and dynamic youth and contemporary increase in violating the social, political and economic spheres of the Nigerian nation have not only made life unbearable but created a re-think on the effective implementation of the existing national policy on education when assessed through a need curriculum.

Ezegbe, Oyeoku, Mezieobi and Okeke (2012) stated that the youth incivility has become the order of the day while civic virtues in all spheres of life have totally declined; the incessant cult activities, kidnapping and recent menace of *Boko Haram* are the attested facts. It is as a result of these enormous problems that the federal government in the past, introduced civic education as a subject in our educational system. Civic education remains an important means of teaching the populace about individual rights and what duties and responsibilities the governed and leaders should do. The reintroduction of civic education as a subject to be taught in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria is expected to further deepen democratic culture and encourage qualitative participation of the average Nigerian in the governance process.

Jekayinfa, Mofoluwawo and Oladiran (2014) stated that the rationale for the reintroduction of civic education in the Nigerian primary and secondary schools has become very obvious because of the dwindling national consciousness, social harmony and patriotic zeal. They further stated that the lack of civic education and patriotic orientation had led to disorientation in schools and the larger society, due to the prevalence of corruption, indiscipline, disrespect for both elders and the rule of law. Adeniran (2012) asserts that in reflection to the past events, Nigeria is facing the threat of losing its much cherished sense of nationhood, cultural identity and indeed the spirit of hospitality.

The introduction of civic education as a compulsory subject in schools according to Sam Egwu, the former minister of education is part of late President Umaru, Yara dua's 7-point reform agenda geared towards the enhancement of the human capital development, which is achievable through participation in learning, child re-orientation and laying a strong foundation for effective citizenship. Civic Education should therefore bother on ethical issues, rights and privileges of individual citizens, leadership, responsibilities of citizens like voting, taxes, the justice system, prisons, people and culture, international relations and many others.

According to Riel Bergen- Mc Craken (ND), the overall goal of civic education is to promote civic engagement and support democratic and participatory governance. The idea behind civic education is to promote the demand for good governance and address a wide variety of political

and governance issues such as corruption, Civic apathy or conflict reconciliation, as well as social issues, like domestic violence, drug abuse, and HIV/AIDS. Generally, civic education has been viewed by Ukegbu, Meziobi, Ajilaye, Abdulrahman and Anyaoha (2009) as a course of study that is geared towards producing responsible and law abiding citizens.

Ukegbe et. al (2009) outlined the objectives of civic education to include:

Developing and transforming the Nigerian youth into effective and responsible citizens by making them law abiding.

Creating awareness of ones rights, duties and obligations as citizens of this great nation and to appreciate the right of other citizens and

Helping the young people to acquire a sense of loyalty, honesty, discipline, courage, dedication, respect, patriotism, hard work, desirable habits and attitudes and spirit of nationalism among students. Civic education also refers to the teaching given to citizens on how to play their civic roles especially within the context of national and global citizenship. (Centre for Civic Education, 1991). Teachers are therefore very crucial to the success of the civic education initiative and implementation, since they share the responsibility to inculcate the right kind of values through effective teaching of civic education. Adenipekun (2010) stated that the new senior secondary school education curriculum (SSCE) that consists of subjects such as civic education whose implementation started in September 2011 has thrown a big challenge to teacher educators who are required to review their teacher preparation programmes in the context of knowledge acquisition of the subject matter, teaching competence and skills. Although, Egwu (2010) urged teachers to acknowledge that they are crucial to the success of Nigeria rebrand as character boulders, Civic education teachers have the responsibility to teach civic education in schools despite the fact that there is a need for teacher training demand for civic education as a specialty.

Furthermore, Wheeler (1967) defined the curriculum as the planned experiences offered to the learner under the guidance of the school. Dike and Eze (2009) also defined the curriculum as an embodiment of all knowledge, skills and attitude, which a nation through her schools, impact on her citizens. More so, a relevant curriculum endows its learner with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitude which enables them to harness resources (material and human) in order to improve the quality of life and the environment.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the researcher in the conduct of this study.

What teaching methods applied by teachers that challenge the implementation of civic education curriculum?

Are the instructional aids available in the teaching of civic education curriculum adequate to its challenges?

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis (Ho) guided the researcher in making decision concerning the study under investigation.

There is no significant difference between the opinions of

teachers on the teaching methods that challenge the implementation of civic education curriculum.

There is no significant difference between the male and female teachers on the availability of instructional aids used for civic education instruction.

### Statement of the Problem

The incessant breakdown of law and order has led to the dwindling national consciousness, social disharmony, prevalence of corruption, indiscipline and disrespect of persons and the law. This scenario may have resulted from disorientation from schools, poor parenting and negative influences from the society. Whereas, the civic education curriculum have been loaded with concepts that provides for child civility, respect for law and order, good citizenship and provision of the Nigerian constitution which are aimed at meaningful learning and good behavior. However, the present state of increasing violence in the social, political and economic spheres of the Nigerian nation with incidences of teenage pregnancy, drug trafficking, decline in values, rape, cultism in schools where civic education is taught, questions the central role of teachers and policy makers to effectively impact or inculcate civic ideals on the child. It is therefore, the intent of this study to unravel the challenges of implementing the junior secondary school civic education curriculum in Rivers State.

### Methodology

#### Research Design

The research design of this study was descriptive survey.

#### Area of the study

The study covers junior secondary schools in four local government areas in Rivers State. These include Obio/Akpo, Port Harcourt, Emohua and Ogu-Bolo local government areas of Rivers state.

#### Population of the study

The population of this study covered teachers of the public junior secondary schools in the four identified local Government areas of Rivers State. This was made up of 1,365 Universal Basic Education social studies/ civic education in the junior secondary schools teachers.

#### Sample and Sampling Techniques

The entire junior secondary schools in the identified local government areas were taken as the population sample. The teachers comprising 520 were selected using the stratified random sampling techniques.

#### Instrument used for data collection

The instruments used for the collection of data for the study were instructional techniques assessment for civic education (ITACE) and civic education implementation questionnaire (CEIQ). These instruments were aimed at assessing the challenges of civic education curriculum content in the research areas, based on the views of the respondents.

#### Validity of the Instrument

Copies of ITACE and CEIQ were given to subject specialist and curriculum experts for vetting. The specialists and experts vetted the two instruments in terms of plausibility, content validity simplicity of vocabulary, sentence structure and relevance to the content. The comments of the specialists and experts were effected and implemented in this study.

### Reliability of Instruments.

Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) techniques was used in determining the reliability coefficients of CEIQ and ITACE. Copies of CEIQ and ITACE were administered to 20 teachers (male and female) in all the government owned junior secondary schools in the four local government areas of interest. Their responses were analyzed using Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) with reliability coefficients of 0.63 and 0.95 respectively. This method estimates the internal consistency of the measuring instruments.

### Data analysis techniques.

The data collated from the response on the instruments ITACE and CEIQ were put together and mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (SD) were used as statistical techniques to answer the research questions formulated while t-test was used to test the hypotheses formulated.

### Results and Discussion

**Table1:** Mean and standard deviation on the responses of teachers on the teaching methods that challenge the implementation of civic education.

S/N	Items statement	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Observation method	72	261	316	261	2.16	0.93	Disagree
2	Adequate field trip	80	253	342	235	2.20	0.92	Disagree
3	Debate	108	130	356	316	2.03	0.98	Disagree
4	Guided inquiry method	124	156	312	282	2.09	1.03	Disagree
5	Lecture method	464	318	94	51	3.33	0.81	Agree
6	Role-playing	122	256	311	221	2.31	0.98	Disagree
7	Experimentation	75	201	379	255	2.11	0.91	Disagree
8	Discussion method	56	343	291	220	2.26	0.89	Disagree
9	Concept mapping	257	301	242	110	2.77	0.99	Agree
10	Computer assisted instruction	123	214	262	311	2.16	1.04	Disagree

In table 1, it was observed that teaching methods such observation method, adequate field trip, debate, guided inquiry, role playing, discussion method and computer assisted instruction do not hinder effective implementation of civic education. This is evident as their mean scores were found less than the criterion mean of 2.50. Also, lecture method and concept mapping strategy were seen as challenges to effective implementation of civic education since their mean scores of 3.33 and 2.77 were greater than the criterion mean (2.50).

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the responses of teachers on the factors related to availability of instructional aids.**

S/N	Items statement	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Inadequate provision of the copies of Nigerian constitution in school is a challenged to effective implementation of civic education curriculum content.	416	331	134	29	3.25	0.82	Agree
2	Non availability of specimen copies of the Nigerian citizenship registration forms hinder effective civic education curriculum content	241	409	181	79	2.89	0.89	Agree
3	Inadequate availability of copies of birth certificate do not negatively affect effective civic education curriculum content.	58	199	316	337	1.98	0.92	Disagree
4	Availability of samples of school rules and regulation booklets impede effective civic education curriculum content.	95	189	374	252	2.14	0.94	Disagree
5	Provision of adequate flash cards depicting pictures on values and rewards system do not promote effective civic education curriculum content	-	45	472	393	1.62	0.58	Disagree
6	Availability of video clips showing citizens performing their civic duties/rights is a set back to the effective civic education instruction	-	61	431	418	1.61	0.61	Disagree
7	Access to information communication technology facilities like projector board will not improve effective civic education curriculum content.	-	39	503	368	1.64	0.56	Disagree
8	Inadequate availability of aids for project on citizenship is a problem to the effective civic education curriculum content	321	306	161	122	2.91	1.03	Agree
9	Provision of charts like printed materials will delay effective implementation civic education curriculum content.	39	175	397	299	1.95	0.83	Disagree

Table 2 revealed that there are some factors related to availability of instructional aids that challenged the implementation of civic education curriculum content. Such factors include inadequate provision of copies of Nigerian constitution in schools, non-availability of specimen copies of Nigerian citizenship registration forms, and inadequate availability of aids for project on citizenship. This is because items associated with these factors had mean scores which are above the criterion mean of 2.50.

Also in table 2, contrary responses were made by teachers on factors related to availability of instructional aids as it affects the effective implementation of civic education curriculum content. These include availability of sample of school rules and regulation booklets, provision of adequate flash cards depicting pictures on values and rewards system, availability of video clips showing citizens performing their civic duties/rights, access to information technology and provision of charts like printed materials. This is again evident as the mean scores of the items associated with these factors are less than the criterion mean (2.50).

**Table 3: Summary of independent t-test analysis on the influence of teachers' gender on their responses on the teaching methods that challenge effective implementation of civic education curriculum content.**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Mean diff	Df	t-cal	t-crit
Male	399	24.89	9.45	2.56	908	3.76	1.960
Female	511	22.33	10.73				

Results in table 3 revealed that the mean scores of the male and female teachers on their responses as regards teaching methods that challenge effective implementation of civic education curriculum are 24.89 and 22.33 respectively. That means, the males had a higher mean score than their female counterpart by a mean difference of 2.56.

When the mean difference was subjected to an independent t-test, a calculated t-value of 3.76 was obtained. This is against a critical t-value of 1.960 at degree of freedom of 908 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected which indicates that a significant difference exist between the mean responses of male and female teachers on the teaching methods that challenge effective implementation of civic education curriculum content.

**Table 4: Summary of independent t-test on the influence of gender on factors-related to availability of instructional aids that challenged effective implementation of civic education curriculum content.**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Mean diff	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Alpha level
Male	399	21.05	8.90	1.90	908	3.15	1.960	0.05
Female	511	19.14	9.15					

In table 4, it was revealed that the mean scores of the male and female teacher on their responses on the factors-related to availability of instructional aids that challenged effective implementation of civic education curriculum content are 21.05 and 19.14 respectively. That means the male teachers scored higher than their female counterparts by mean difference of 1.90.

Furthermore, when the mean difference was subjected to an independent t-test statistics, a calculated t-value of 3.15 was obtained. This is against the critical t-value of 1.960 at degree of freedom of 908 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected indicating that a significant difference existed between the mean scores of male and female teachers on factors-related to availability of instructional aids that challenge effective implementation of civic education curriculum content.

#### Discussion of findings

Our study revealed that lecture method and concept mapping strategies are challenges to the implementation of civic education curriculum at the junior secondary level. This is because the mean scores, 3.33 and 2.7 of the two strategies were greater than the criterion mean. This agrees well with the views of Tovmasyan and Thomas (2008), Adepoju, Fabiyi (2008) and Ezegebe (2012). In terms of the availability of instructional aid that challenge the implementation of the civic education, the study identified such factors as inadequate provision of copies of the Nigerian constitution in schools and non-provision of copies of the Nigerian citizenship registration forms.

More so, there was a significant difference in the opinions expressed among teachers on teaching methods as a challenge to the implementation of civic education curriculum. This also agrees with findings of Opara (2002). On the opinions of the male and female teachers on availability of instructional materials, there was no significant difference in their positions.

#### Conclusion

The use of non-innovative teaching methods, have grossly affected the implementation of the subject matter in the classroom in order to achieve desired objectives.

More so, lack of instructional aids used by teachers to enhance the teaching of civic education to students and to illustrate or make simpler the teaching and learning more interesting have significantly affected the delivery of instruction in the classroom.

The inability of government and stakeholders to provide the needed resources to effectively improve the teaching and learning of civic education have practically made it difficult for the aims, goals and objectives to be achieved.

#### Recommendations

We proffer the following recommendations.

That teachers engage in the teaching of civic education should improve on their teaching methods and encourage the use of instructional aids

That civic education teachers should as a necessity avail themselves with positive roles required of them, in the course of delivery civic education to their pupils

#### Declaration

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors hereby declare publicly that there is no conflict of interest and admits that this work does not violate any ethical rule(s)

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