

ATTITUDE AND PREFERENCE OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS TO CIVIC EDUCATION IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

¹ABDULSALAM, A. A., ²OKUNLOYE, R. W. & ³OPARINDE, F. O.

^{1,2}*Social Sciences Education Department
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria*

³*Department of Social Studies, Osun State College of Education, Ila
Orangun*

abdulsalam.aa@unilorin.edu.ng, willyroti@gmail.com, folafola@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examined attitude and preference of junior secondary school students to Civic Education in Ilorin Metropolis. The study adopted descriptive research design. The study was carried out in 10 purposely selected secondary schools in Ilorin, Kwara State, while 200 Junior Secondary School (JSS III) Students both male and female with age differences were randomly selected as samples for investigation. Data for the study were collected through a questionnaire designed by the researcher to obtain information based on the categorization of students' attitude and preference. While split half method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and the reliability index stood at 0.78. The data for the study were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test Statistics. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents' attitude to Civic Education were positive. Findings of the study also revealed that majority of the respondents' had high preference for Civic Education. Finding revealed that there was a significant difference in the attitude to Civic Education and preference for Civic Education of junior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis. Findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the attitude to Civic Education and preference for Civic Education on the basis of gender. Recommendations made include: Civic Education should be integrated into the Nigerian teacher education programme and in-service training on civic and political matters should be done through regular seminars and workshops based on the findings of the study.

Keywords: Attitude, Preference, Civic Education and Secondary School Students

Introduction

Civic Education is one of the subjects studied in junior secondary schools. It was introduced to school curriculum as an instrument for sensitization and cultivation of patriotism, loyalty and values in students. It also provides students with the opportunity and ability to perform their rights, duties and obligations so as to enhance and promote good values in our society. Civic Education was coined from citizenship education, which simply means an educational and learning activities specifically meant to create awareness, teach right values, right attitudes and behaviour that are acceptable to the society where individual lives. Civic Education has been widely conceived as a type of education that aids effective democratic process (Mehlinger, 1977; Ganuju, 2011; Wahab, 2011). Collaborating with this view, Oyesiku, (2010) described Civic Education as a school subject that prepares people, especially the youths, to carry out their roles as citizens. The National Orientation Agency (NOA, 2006) was of the view that, the main philosophy behind the teaching and learning of Civic Education Curriculum in Nigerian schools is the production of effective citizens and of forging a cohesive society that will support nation building by a way of classroom mediation of curriculum programmes. Generally, Civic Education has been viewed by many academics as a course of study that is geared towards producing responsible and law abiding citizens (Ukegbu, Mezieobi, Ajileye, Abdulrahman, & Anyaoha 2009; Ogundare, 2011). For instance, Ukegbu, et. al., (2009) outlined objectives of Civic Education to include: Evolving and converting the Nigeria youths into operative and responsible citizens by making them decent. Producing consciousness of one's rights, duties and obligations as citizens of this great nation and also to grow the rights of other citizens, and helping the young people to acquire a sense of faithfulness, trustworthiness, self-restraint, courage, dedication, respect, patriotism, hard work. It inculcates in students, the spirit of nationalism and desirable habits, values and attitudes.

The rapid changes in the developed world have not only led to changes in organizational thinking and working environments, but also in human values, beliefs and behaviors that guide the thoughts and actions of billions of people throughout the world. The domain of education, like all other functional part of society, is presently being profoundly challenged by a rapidly changing global links, interactions and dependencies. Today there is emerging world of intense cultural exchanges in which both democratic advancement and transition are possible which is base on the recognition of, adherence to and active promotion of human rights, the diversity of cultures

and the rule of law, all of which becomes essential for contemporary citizenship. (ElviPiršl, OrjanaMarušić-Štimac, & Alessandra Pokrajac-Bulian, 1974). The main important functions of education is to advance the culture of democracy and human rights, then the primary objectives of schools curriculum is to establish a high level of awareness of how to share fundamental values in order to develop a free, tolerant and just society. Understanding and assisting democratic development, that is acquiring basic skills, including ability to think critically, communicate effectively and resolve problems without violence. Seeking approval with others cooperatively, open-minded discourses and communicative processes are the competencies that need to become the basic personality of democratic citizens. This leads to think of the necessity to promoting democratic citizenship through not merely civic education, but a civic education which is interlinked with human rights education, peace education and intercultural education.

Civic Education is a tool for promoting citizen participation in democratic processes. It empowers citizens, both as individuals and as part of collective societal groups. Citizen participation is built by protecting individual and collective rights and ensuring appreciation of each citizen's obligations to the society of which they are a part. All citizens be it male or female; young or old; civil servants; politicians; rural or urban- are expected to benefit from Civic Education. A reward from civic disposition, civic skills and an enhancement of the knowledge base of citizens can make a significant contribution to achieving development objectives. For example, in transition context, civic education can help reduce uncertainty about how the transition is unfolding and how it will affect citizens. It can also help citizens to better understand their individual rights and responsibilities, and position them to be active participants in transition decisions and processes. Citizens are at the heart of a functioning democracy; they give life and meaning to the principles, processes and institutions. For democracy to develop and endure, citizens need to exercise their rights and responsibilities. Without adequate orientation for citizens on better ways to involve in politic, government power might be abused and the basic rights and freedoms of democracy might not be unrealized, because a successful democracy requires informed participation, citizens must first understand ideas about citizenship, politics and government. They need knowledge to make decisions about policy preferences and the proper use of authority, along with the skills to voice their concerns and to hold government officials accountable. And then, they need to exercise their rights, and have the political space to do so without

unreasonable resistance or harassment from authorities or others.

In addition, attitudes determine what each individual will see, hear, think and do. They are rooted in experience and do not become automatic routine conduct. Attitude means the individual's prevailing tendency to respond favorably or unfavorably to person or group of people, institutions or events. Attitudes can be positive (values) or negative (prejudice) (Leite, 2004). The role of Civic Education in secondary school students cannot be overemphasized because it helps them know their rights, duties and obligations as it promotes patriotism. However, the attitude and student's preference should be considered important because it would enhance proper implementation of its objectives and goals. It is therefore the interest of this research to study in secondary school student's attitude and preference for Civic Education.

Hence, the purpose of this research work is to examine the attitudes and preference for Civic Education by students in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis. However, the specific purposes of the study are to:

1. ascertain the attitude of students towards Civic Education in junior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.
2. ascertain the level of preference for civic education in secondary junior schools in Ilorin metropolis.
3. ascertain if there is a significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.
4. ascertain if there is a significant difference in the attitude of male and female to Civic Education in junior secondary school in Ilorin metropolis?

Research Questions

1. What is the attitude to Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis?
2. What is the preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis?
3. Is there a significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis?
4. Is there significant difference in the attitude of male and female to Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis?

Research Hypothesis

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female to Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the preference for Civic Education among secondary schools' male and female students in Ilorin metropolis.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey as a method most suitable for this. The population for this study were all junior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis. Purposive sampling technique was used to select JSS III student, based on the fact that they have been exposed to greater learning experience(s) among junior secondary school students in Ilorin, metropolis. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 10 co-educational junior secondary schools within Ilorin metropolis in the course of this study, while it was also used to select 200 junior secondary school (JSS III) students. In addition, stratified sampling technique was used to select the respondents on the basis of gender. A researcher-design questionnaire titled "Attitude and Preference of Junior Secondary School Students to Civic Education Questionnaire (APJSSSCEQ)". APJSSSCEQ was divide into to two sections A and B. Section A contain 9 items that was used to elicit information the junior secondary school students' attitude toward Civic Education, while Section B contain 8 items that was used to elicit information on preference for Civic Education. The response pattern was on four Likert scale of Strongly Agree = SA (4 points), Agree = A (3points), Disagree = D (2points), and Strongly Disagree = SD (1point). Cumulative mean was used in answering research questions 1 and 2, while paired t-test and independent t-test were used in testing the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

Results

Research Question One: *What is the preferred attitude to Civic Education among junior secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis?*

In order to answer this research question, respondents' responses on the attitude to Education questionnaire were collated. The summary of the results are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Cumulative Mean of Attitude to Civic Education among Junior Secondary Schools Students in Ilorin Metropolis

S/N	Attitude to Civic Education	Mean
1.	I enjoy being in Civic Education class	4.30
2.	Civic Education helps me to know my rights and duties	3.88
3.	I would be able to know my duties and rights without Civic Education	2.21
4.	I would have not chosen Civic Education if it was not compulsory	2.14
5.	I do not like Civic Education as I like other subjects	2.19
6.	I read and understand Civic Education easily	3.17
7.	Civic Education is difficult to comprehend	3.00
8.	My teacher teaches well and I find Civic Education easy to understand	2.49
9.	I prefer Civic Education to other subjects	3.42
Weighted Mean Score		26.80

Table 1 indicates that 200 respondents participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information on attitude to Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis revealed that majority of the respondents' attitude to Civic Education among junior secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis was positive, because the benchmark weighted mean score stood at 22.5 and their weighted mean score was 26.80 which is above the benchmark weighted mean score.

Research Question Two: *What is the preference for Civic Education among secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis?*

In order to answer this research question, respondents' responses on the preference for Civic Education questionnaire were collated. The summary of the results is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Cumulative Mean of Preference for Civic Education among Junior Secondary Schools Students in Ilorin Metropolis

S/N	Preference for Civic Education	Mean
1.	Civic Education has helped me to exercise my rights and duties	3.52
2.	Civic Education makes me politically active	2.30
3.	Civic Education has helped me to know about political parties	2.53
4.	Civic Education makes me aware of the system of government	2.44
5.	Civic Education has helped me to fight for my right	3.49
6.	The knowledge of Civic Education has helped me to perform my duties	2.91
7.	Civic Education has reduced the rate at which people abuse my right	2.59
8.	Civic Education has reduced the rate at which government abuse my rights	3.53
Weighted Mean Score		23.31

Table 2 indicates that 200 respondents participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information on preference for to Civic Education among junior secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis revealed that majority of the respondents' preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis was high, because the benchmark weighted mean score stood at 20 and their weighted mean score was 23.31 which is above the benchmark weighted mean score.

Hypotheses Testing

Three research hypotheses postulated for this study were tested using the paired t-test and the independent t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools' students in Ilorin metropolis.*

In order to test this research hypothesis, respondents' responses to the attitude to and preference for Civic Education questionnaires were collated. The data collected from the study was analyzed as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Paired t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Attitude to and Preference for Civic Education among Junior Secondary Schools Students in Ilorin Metropolis

Variable	N	Mean	Std	df	Cal.t	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
Attitude	200	26.80	5.76	199	7.39	0.00	H₀₁
Preference	200	23.31	5.29				Rejected

$p > 0.05$

As shown on Table 3, the calculated t-value was 7.39 while its calculated significance value is 0.00 of df 1/199 at alpha level of 0.05. On this basis, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis. The reason was that the calculated significance value (0.00) was lower than 0.05 alpha level, ($0.00 < 0.05$).

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female to Civic Education among junior secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis.*

In order to test this research hypothesis, respondents' responses to the attitude of male and female to Civic Education questionnaires were collated. The data collected from the study was analyzed as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Attitude of Male and Female to Civic Education among Junior Secondary Schools Students in Ilorin Metropolis

Gender	N	Mean	Std	df	Cal.t	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	102	27.33	5.43	198	0.94	0.35	H₀₂ Accepted
Female	98	26.24	6.11				

$\rho > 0.05$

As shown on Table 4, the calculated t-value was 0.94 while its calculated significance value is 0.35 of df 2/198 at alpha level of 0.05. On this basis, the null hypothesis two was therefore accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female to Civic Education among junior secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis. The reason was that the calculated significance value (0.35) was greater than 0.05 alpha level, ($0.35 > 0.05$).

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the preference for Civic Education among junior secondary schools male and female students in Ilorin metropolis.

In order to test this research hypothesis, respondents' responses to the preference for Civic Education questionnaires were collated based on gender. The data collected from the study was analyzed as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: t-test Analysis of the Difference in the Preference for Civic Education among Junior Secondary Schools Male and Female Students in Ilorin Metropolis

Gender	N	Mean	Std	df	Cal.t	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	102	23.96	5.70	198	1.26	0.21	H₀₂ Accepted
Female	98	22.63	4.79				

$\rho > 0.05$

As shown on Table 6, the calculated t-value was 1.26 while its calculated significance value is 0.21 of df 2/198 at alpha level of 0.05. On this basis, the null hypothesis three was therefore accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the preference for Civic Education among junior and senior secondary schools male and female

students in Ilorin metropolis. The reason was that the calculated significance value (0.21) was greater than 0.05 alpha level, ($0.21 > 0.05$).

Discussion of Findings

Finding revealed that the majority of the respondents' attitude to Civic Education among secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis was positive. This finding is in consonance with that of Mohd, Mohd, Suzana, and Wan, (2014) found out that teachers attitude towards inclusive education was on the high side. Another finding shows that majority of the respondents' preference for Civic Education among secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis was high. This finding might be as result of the important the Federal Government of Nigeria attached to the Civic Education.

Furthermore, finding revealed that there was a significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis. This finding negates that of Piršl, Marušic-Štimac and Pokrajac-Bulian (2007) that reported that, there was no significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among secondary schools students.

Also, the finding revealed that there was no significant difference in the attitude of male and female to Civic Education among secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis. This finding is in dissonance with that of Piršl, Marušic-Štimac and Pokrajac-Bulian (2007) reported that, there was statistically significant difference in the attitude for Civic Education among secondary schools male and female students. Also, Van Reusen, Shoho, Barker, (2001) found out that there was no significant difference between gender and the attitude of teachers for inclusive education.

Finding showed that there is no significant difference in the preference for Civic Education among secondary schools male and female students in Ilorin metropolis. This finding is in dissonance with that of Piršl, Marušic-Štimac and Pokrajac-Bulian (2007) reported that there is statistically significant difference in the preference for Civic Education among secondary schools male and female students.

Conclusion

Finding revealed that the majority of the respondents' attitude to Civic Education among junior and senior secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis was positive. Another finding shows that majority of the respondents' preference for Civic Education among secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis was high. Furthermore, finding revealed that there was a

significant difference in the attitude to and preference for Civic Education among secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis. Also, finding revealed that there was no significant difference in the attitude of male and female to Civic Education among secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis. Finding showed that there was no significant difference in the preference for Civic Education among secondary schools male and female students in Ilorin metropolis. It is important to systematically promote education for democratic citizens from the very beginning of school life and adopt new interactive teaching strategies in the curriculum, developing students' sense of their rights and responsibilities. Equally important issue is the training of teachers to convey democratic citizenship messages and to provide a democratic citizenship climate in their schools. Finally, good civic education or education for democratic citizenship and human rights must assist every young person in acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills pertinent to efficient functioning as an individual and as a citizen in a local setting, national society and the world community.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were put forward base on the summary of findings and conclusions reached thereafter. The recommendations are:

1. Civic Education should be integrated into the Nigerian teacher education programme. All student's teacher, regardless the course of study, should be exposed to civic and political issues and concepts.
2. In-service training on civic and political matters through regular seminars and workshops should be given to teachers in Nigeria.
3. The teaching of Civic Education should be mandated for all schools in the country.

The Nigerian government and educational agencies should encourage and sponsor the publication of books relevant to the curriculum content of secondary school Civic Education.

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