
**IMPACTS OF CIVIL LITERACY, CIVIL SKILLS AND CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT (3C) ON CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
AMONG UPPER BASIC STUDENTS IN ILESA, OSUN
STATE, NIGERIA**

Adeyoola Eunice **AKINWANDE** & Olusegun Tunde **EGBETOLA**
Department of Social Studies
Osun State College of Education, Ilesa

Abstract

This study examined the impacts of civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement (3C) towards citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. The best way to inculcate civic knowledge to students is to incorporate civic familiarity as an accumulation of the citizens' intelligence which is needed to develop in the adolescents. The study explored a correlational design. The researchers implemented a simple random sampling techniques to the chosen population. The study therefore employed one hundred and fifty (150) among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. The instruments used for the data collection comprised; (civil literacy $\alpha=0.68$; civil skills $\alpha=0.72$; civic engagement $\alpha=0.84$ and citizenship education scale ($\alpha=0.91$) scales. Three research questions were answered. Data obtained were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis. The result has shown that (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) had a significant relationship with the citizenship education among upper basic students; The findings further reveal

that civil skills ($F(3, 147) = 103.692, P < 0.001$). The independent variables jointly account accounted for 62.3% ($Adj.R^2 = .623$) variance in the prediction of citizenship education among upper basic students while, the most potent predictor factor was civil skills ($Beta = .576, t = 10.982, P < 0.001$) as revealed in the study. Based on the findings the study recommends that government should implement citizenship education via history and geography at the secondary level with well-equipped teachers to discharge the requisite knowledge in Social Studies and civic related subjects.

Keywords: Civil literacy, Civil skills, Civic engagement, Citizenship education, Upper basic students, Nigeria.

Introduction

The notion “citizenship” dates back to the ancient Greek State of Athens. Here, the population of the State as divided into two different classes. The first class was the citizens. These citizens enjoyed both political and civil rights and had direct and active cooperation in all the functions of the civil and military life and required to perform certain duties (Kapur, 1997). The slaves who constituted the second class had no such rights and as such suffered all kinds of political and economic disparities. Thus, the slaves were not entitled to the privileges of a citizen. However, the modern concept of citizenship has come to mean being a full member of a state and enjoying the rights and privileges of that state (Kapur, 1997). As every right has a corresponding duty, a citizen is required by the state to render his or her duties to the state.

For citizens to be able to perform their duties as required by the state and enjoy their rights as enshrined in constitutions, they must be educated in their rights and responsibilities, schools have been charged with the transmission of knowledge, understanding, right attitudes and skills needed by the citizens to perform their duties and enjoy their rights (Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004). Schools serve as places that assist students by providing citizenship

education in order to develop citizens' understanding of society and commitment to political and civic engagement. In this role, schools can help foster the knowledge, skills and dispositions that young people need to develop into politically and socially responsible individuals (Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004). In Nigeria, citizenship education is not new. Traditionally, the Nigeria community prepares the youth through the informal system of education. The responsibility of training the youth was however the responsibility of both the nuclear and the extended family (MacWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1978). This type of education offered knowledge and practical skills for active participation in community life.

However, the focus of citizenship education is thus on the provision of useful practical training as pre-requisite for citizens to participate effectively in all spheres of social, political and economic life, and the development of a sense of belongingness in the society in which they live. In the formal education system in Nigeria, citizenship education is seen as the responsibility of the school, with the subject area of Social Studies bearing particular responsibility for educating citizens. It is therefore seen as the cornerstone of Social Studies education which is meant to ensure that students are prepared for effective citizens and active participation in the local, national, and global communities (Westheimer & Kahne, 2003). Although, a number of subjects such as Religious and Moral Education (RME), History, Sociology have been introduced for the purpose of teaching students to become active citizens (Nigeria Education Service [NES], 2010), it is the Social Studies with its integrative and incorporated nature (integrating History and other social sciences disciplines), that has been acknowledged as a major vehicle in promoting effective citizenship among Nigeria students (NES, 2010).

It is based on these that the National Council for the Social Studies [NCSS] (1994) describes the primary purpose of Social Studies as helping young people to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. The major aim of citizenship education is to equip students with the practical skills of making meaningful contributions towards the development of

their society. It is seen as a cross-discipline subject since it cuts across political, social, and economic boundaries (Smith, 1988). It was based on the idea of developing civic competence among students in Nigeria Social Studies was introduced into the education system and was even made a core subject at the basic and senior high school levels of education. It was hoped that when introduced into the Nigeria educational system, it would enable all citizens to participate as fully as possible in cultural, economic, political and social life since citizenship education through Social Studies is meant to prepare the learner to be tolerant, patriotic, one who is devoted to freedom and has faith in democratic values and ideals of life.

Despite the provision made for introducing the learner to citizenship education through Social Studies education, it is widely acclaimed that very little attention is given to citizenship education at the senior high school. This situation threatens the development of the youth to becoming good citizens who are prepared to shoulder the responsibilities of Nigeria (Kankam & Kwenin, 2010). Studying classroom practices of citizenship education through the use of the results of the National Teacher Evaluation System is intended to promote its formative character. This teaching evaluation system was created in Nigeria to strengthen and improve the work carried out by school teachers and providing clear and precise comments on the aspects of their pedagogical practices that can be developed. The components of citizenship education are complex to define because both the notion of citizenship and its educational elements change over time.

Also, they have multiple implications for people's daily lives and educational systems (Ross & Vinson, 2012). In this regard, there is no single answer about the meanings and purposes of Citizen Education. Zúñiga (2015), conceived a possible explanation is that educational systems worldwide tend to implement policies that are reactive to short-term situations which difficulties the planning of long-term designs oriented to promote a particular type of society or citizen. This is also supported by evidence that young people graduate from senior high schools with little or no knowledge of or interest in community participation and decisions that affect their lives which has led to a rise in political apathy, almost as fast as the

increasing violent crime rate (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006). The resurgence of vigilantism, the impact of global forces on local social traditions, the stresses created by increasingly multicultural societies, the decline of volunteerism in community activities, and the breakdown of moral fabric and democratic deficit (Mellor & Prior, 2004; Wilkins, 2003). One does not know if teachers and students do not hold the right perceptions about citizenship education, or do not understand the roles of citizenship education in preparing productive citizens. This study incorporated the 3C's of Civil Knowledge as revealed in this study.

Civic literacy teaches values that can conflict, such as patriotism vs. membership in global society, or socially acceptable attitudes of character vs. independent thinking (Nelson, 1991). Civic education requirements and curricula differ among states, and even among school districts within states of the federation. However, even when civic education policies mandate civic requirements, they often do not mandate the values and norms to be taught. State policies requiring civics coursework or examination vary widely. As of 2003, only five states required students to pass a Social Studies examination as a high school graduation requirement (National Center for Learning and Citizenship 2003). Service-learning requirements also are becoming more common in high school curricula. Service-learning is generally defined as including a "curriculum-based form of community service" (Stagg 2004, p. 1). In 1999, 30% of high school students participated in a service-learning project. Also, in 2004, 44% of high schools participated in service-learning projects respectively.

A few studies have examined the contribution of civic education to building civic knowledge and engagement. Niemi and Junn (2018) in particular have examined civic education and civic knowledge to ascertain the proactiveness of civil knowledge in the society. Torney-Purta (2002), reports the results of a study that links formal education with civic knowledge and engagement. These studies have incorporated civic skills within their analyses, but have not employed civic skills as outcomes. Other quantitative studies of civic skills have not examined civic education and have not applied

a matching methods framework to the study of civic education (Campbell 2001; Schwadel, 2002).

Interestingly, Civic skills is recognised as the abilities to communicate efficiently and effectively with an elected official, organize to influence policy, understand and participate in one's polity, and think critically about civic and political life. In short, civic skills enable citizens to participate in the democratic process. Without them, individuals cannot effectively engage in democratic deliberation (Soltan, 1999). Civic skills comprise individual abilities and these abilities range from "... the communications and organizational abilities that allow citizens to use time and money effectively in political life" to "skills for political action, communication, ability to identify social issues, and tolerance," and "skills useful in civic endeavors" (Moely, 2002). Moely defines civic skills as "a set of skills which are required to effectively participate in civic and political life ... integral to ... political participation".

Miller and Kimmel (2013) explore youth development of citizenship behaviours, youth development of civic engagement, and youth relations with social institutions. Their studies center on political socialization theory. Political socialization theory explains the origins and acquisitions of youth belief systems and the development of political consciousness in individuals (Renshon 1977). However, few researchers have examined how civic skills originate in citizens. While political socialization research examines the development of political orientations and behaviors, it does not examine how young people become capable of political participation. In short, political socialization research has focused on the development of political willingness, not political abilities. Flanagan (2013) examines the benefits of youth participation in groups toward developing skills and engagement.

Flanagan further argued that youth membership in community institutions requires exercising rights and responsibilities related to membership. It was reported that these responsibilities build civic skills. As a contrast to political socialization theory, she illuminates youth group participation as the primary source for youth ties to a community. Similarly, Youniss, (2001) whose finding depicts that youth development of civic identity through group

participation. They maintain that participation in groups introduces youth to the basic roles and organizational processes required for adult civic engagement. Schur (2013), in her study of disabled workers, finds that employment increases political activity by increasing income, efficacy, and civic skills. Her research directionally links employment to civic skill development to political participation. Pateman (1999) asserts that citizens practice political participation skills through employment. She claims that political attitudes are formed in the workplace and that professional workers have more opportunities to learn participatory skills than laborers and non-professionals.

Another variable in this study is civil engagement. Civic engagement is a construct that attracts the attributes of various activities falling into three not necessarily exclusive categories: (1) civic activities, (2) political voice activities, and (3) electoral activities (Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, & Jenkins, 2012). Civic activities focus on voluntary associations that promote the health and wellbeing of a community. These activities include membership in genealogical organizations, religious organizations, clubs, or professional associations as well as volunteering, charitable fundraising, and community problem-solving. Political voice and electoral activities emphasize the role of citizenship in Nigeria democracy. Political voice activities involve efforts to shape social institutions through collective action. Examples of political voice activities include boycotting companies, signing petitions, protesting, expressing opinions to media sources, and lobbying efforts such as writing letters or e-mails, testifying, and visits with policymakers. Lastly, electoral activities include all those activities aimed at influencing the outcomes of the Nigeria electoral process, such as voting, campaigning, and registering other people to vote.

Civic engagement plays a particularly important role in the experiences of college and university students. At the individual level, civic engagement can help develop habits and social networks that make people more employable. Civically engaged students have higher rates of satisfaction with college, higher GPAs, and higher retention rates; they are also more likely to complete degrees than are their less engaged peers (Greenblatt, 2012). Political activism,

correlates to higher reported life satisfaction, less stress, and greater overall wellbeing (Klar and Kasser, 2009; Sanders, 2001). Furthermore, volunteering results in increased voting and feelings of empowerment as citizens (Greenblatt, 2012).

Although, voter turnout among university and college students has historically been higher than voter turnout among the general population, this difference has leveled out in recent elections. According to a national study of college student voting, turnout among college and university students in most elections is 42% nationally (Thomas & Benenson, 2016). Caputo (2010) found that education, income, and marital status correlated with higher civic engagement. The presence of children in the home and possession of college degrees correlated to nonactivist forms of civic engagement. It was further reported that youth whose parents volunteered were more likely to be civically engaged themselves. Although, these findings provide some prospects for encouraging civic engagement, they fail to adequately spur political voice or electoral activities. Levine and Liu (2015) concluded that we have been successful in building an infrastructure of volunteer service but have failed to adequately address the other forms of civic engagement. It is based on this backdrop that this study is being conducted to explore the impact of effects of civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement (3C) towards citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The broad objectives of this paper were to investigate the impact of impact of effects of civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement (3C) towards citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. Specifically, it:

- i. investigated the relationship that exists between civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.
- ii. determined the joint contribution of civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement on citizenship education among

- upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.
- iii. explore the relative contributions of civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀1: There will be no significant relationship between the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria

H₀2: There will be no significant joint contribution of the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria

H₀3: There will be no significant relative effect of the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Methods

The study adopted a correlational research method which is concerned with measuring the degree between two or more variables for the purpose of making predictions of the independent variables on the criterion factor, citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. Moreso, the researcher does not have any control over the related variables in the study.

The population for this study comprised of all students from junior secondary school particularly, from Ilesa East Local Government Area among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. Ilesa East is one of the sub-hub metropolitan local government in Osun State. The LGA has about an estimation of 24 junior upper basic schools within its geographical coverage. A simple random sampling technique was used to select ten (10) upper basic

secondary schools from the existing 24 secondary schools within its geographical coverage. The technique employed was to select fifteen (15) students from each of the upper basic classes within the school to make up a total sum of one hundred and fifty (150) adolescents which formed the sample of the study. Four scales were used to elicit information from the participants. The scales were piloting a week before the real administration to certify that the scales are fit and does not have ambiguous items therein. The sections are: A, B, C, and D. Four instruments were used for the data collection, which include: Civil Literacy (CL), Civil Skills (CS), Civic Engagement (CE) and Citizenship Education (CE) Scales respectively. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Linear Regression Analysis to test the three research questions at 0.05 levels of significance using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, afterwards the result obtained was interpreted as follows.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant relationship between the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Zero-Order Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between Study Variables

Variables	Mean	SD	r	P
Citizenship education	77.58	27.74		
Civil Literacy	81.64	21.91	.805**	<.05
Civil Skills	60.70	27.87	.678**	<.05
Civic Engagement	52.56	19.47	.759**	<.05

**Correlation is significant at 0.05 (2-tailed)

The result found from the test has shown in Table 1. The result revealed that there was a positive significant relationship between

the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. The result shows that civil literacy positively correlated with citizenship education ($r= 0.805^{**}$, $p<.05$), followed by civil skills ($r= 0.759^*$, $p<.05$) and civic engagement ($r= 0.678^*$, $p<.05$) among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant joint contribution of the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of Regression for the Joint Contributions of Independent Variables in the Prediction of Citizenship Education among Upper Basic Students

R =.754 ^a R Square =. 630 Adjusted R square =. 623 Std. Error =8.38251						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17797.934	3	5932.645	103.6	.000 ^b
	Residual	6579.645	147	57.214		92
	Total	24377.580	150			

® **Dependent variable:** Citizenship education among upper basic students.

Table 2 reveals that significant joint effect of the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions $R = 0.754$ and multiple R-square = 0.630. This suggests that the three factors combined accounted for 62.3% ($Adj.R^2=. 623$) variance in the prediction of citizenship education among upper

basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. However, the other factors accounting for a 37.7 % variance are beyond the scope of this study. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there was a significant effect of the independent variables on the citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria, [F (3, 117) = 103.692, P<0.001].

Hypothesis 3: There will be no significant relative contribution of the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Relative Effect of the Independent Variables in the Prediction of Citizenship Education among Upper Basic Students

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	-36.280	5.527		-6.564	.000
Civil literacy	.297	.089	.184	3.347	.001
Civil skills	1.057	.096	.576	10.982	.000
Civic engagement	.145	.052	.149	2.794	.000

® **Dependent variable:** Citizenship education among upper basic students.

Table 3 shows that the three predictive factors (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) are potent predictors of citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. The most potent factor was civil skills (Beta = . 576, t=10.982, P<0.001); followed by civil literacy (Beta =. 184, t=3.347<0.05), and lastly, civic engagement (Beta =. 149, t=2.794, P<0.001). This implies that, an increase in the independent variables among adolescents has shown decreases in the tendency for other factors

to display a higher degree of citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria.

Discussions

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that there is a positive significant relationship among the independent variables on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. This finding corroborates the outcome of Miller and Kimmel (2013) explore youth development of citizenship behaviors, youth development of civic engagement, and youth relations with social institutions. Their studies center on political socialization theory. Political socialization theory explains the origins and acquisitions of youth belief systems and the development of political consciousness in individuals (Renshon 1977). In a 2011 report, the National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) reported that “civic health matters for economic resilience”. The NCoC study found that communities with higher rates of civic engagement recovered faster economically after the recession. At the individual level, civic engagement can help develop habits and social networks that make people more employable. Similarly, Schur (2013), in her study of disabled workers, finds that employment increases political activity by increasing income, efficacy, and civic skills. Her research directionally links employment to civic skill development to political participation. Pateman (1999) also asserts that citizens practice political participation skills through employment. She claims that political attitudes are formed in the workplace and that professional workers have more opportunities to learn participatory skills than laborers and non-professionals.

The second research hypothesis revealed a joint effect contribution of the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. This result is in line with the findings Citizen Education. Zúñiga (2015), conceived a possible explanation is that educational systems worldwide tend to implement policies that are reactive to short-term situations which difficulties the planning of long-term designs oriented to promote

a particular type of society or citizen. This is also supported by evidence that young people graduate from senior high schools with little or no knowledge of or interest in community participation and decisions that affect their lives which has led to a rise in political apathy, almost as fast as the increasing violent crime rate (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006).

According to Niemi and Junn (2018) in particular have examined civic education and civic knowledge to ascertain the proactiveness of civil knowledge in the society. Torney-Purta (2002) reports the results of a study that links formal education with civic knowledge and engagement. These studies have incorporated civic skills within their analyses, but have not employed civic skills as outcomes. In this role, schools can help foster the knowledge, skills and dispositions that young people need to develop into politically and socially responsible individuals (Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004). Westheimer & Kahne, (2003) reported that Social Studies education which is meant to ensure that students are prepared for effective citizens and active participation in the local, national, and global communities.

The result of the third hypothesis revealed that there is a relative significant effect of the independent variables (civil literacy, civil skills and civic engagement) on citizenship education among upper basic students in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. This study supports the findings of Akinboye (1987) observes that a good number of adolescent and youths in many Nigerian secondary schools have incongruent patterns between their aspirations and subject combination for the school certificate examination. Similarly, Nelson-Jones (2017) suggests that the term counselling includes work with individuals and with relationships which may be developmental, crisis support, psychotherapy, guiding, or problem solving with the aim of giving the client an opportunity to explore, discover and clarify ways of living more satisfyingly and resourcefully. Findings by Caputo (2010) found that education, income, and marital status correlated with higher civic engagement. The presence of children in the home and possession of college degrees correlated to nonactivist forms of civic engagement. It was further reported that youth whose parents volunteered were more likely to be civically

engaged themselves. Although, these findings provide some prospects for encouraging civic engagement, they fail to adequately spur political voice or electoral activities.

Conclusion

It was concluded that teachers and students among the basic knowledge gap should provide adequate citizenship education to the learners through the inculcation of ideas, beliefs, desirable attitudes and behaviour into young people to become responsible adults but also knowledge of the constitution, its principles, values, as well as history and its application to contemporary life. Besides, it includes the conscious attempt to offer the young generation moral, social, intellectual qualities and knowledge about cultural heritage. The students can operate in their best if citizenship education is promoted through Social Studies, and that Social Studies has the primary responsibility of developing desirable attitudes, behaviour and values of students. This shows that they are positively predisposed to embracing any efforts to promote the teaching and learning of citizenship education. Moreso, inadequacy of teaching and learning resources for Social Studies at the basic junior level and low recognition of citizenship education pose serious problems to the teaching and learning of citizenship education in Social Studies.

Recommendations

The government should implement citizenship education via history and geography at the secondary level. This will give citizenship education the needed attention as given to the other social sciences subjects. If the teaching and learning of citizenship education in Social Studies is to be promoted in all secondary schools, then, necessary teaching and learning resources should be provided. Although, the availability of well-equipped teachers with requisite knowledge in Social Studies and civic related subjects are no doubt important, the necessary teaching and learning resources which facilitate or support effective teaching and learning are equally important. Resources such as Social Studies room, museum,

laboratory, reference books, and audio-visual materials which engage students' attention should be provided since learning occurs through the active behaviour of the learner.

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