
**RAISING GLOBAL CITIZENS AMONG SOCIAL STUDIES:
TOWARDS A NEW PEDAGOGY VISION**

John Olusola **AKANNI**
Departments of General Studies
Emmanuel Alayande College of Education
Oyo, Oyo State

Abstract

This study examines the building of global citizens through citizenship education and its implication for global best practices in Social Studies. The aims of the study were to review the concept of Citizenship Education, global citizens and global citizens' responsibilities and also to examine how Citizenship education has influenced global citizens. The study was divided into three sections; the introduction section in which the background to the study was discussed and the objectives of the study are stated; the conceptual review which comprises conceptual clarifications on some concepts related to the study such as global citizens, Citizenship education, etc. The last section covers the conclusion and some policy recommendations on the study. It was recommended that among others Government should provide adequate qualified teachers for Social Studies. Also, there is a need for repositioning Social Studies education to address the issues and challenges of global citizens and Citizenship education. It is also recommended that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) should be included in the higher school curriculum as a course of study.

Keywords: Citizenship Education, Global Best Practices, Global Citizens and Social Studies.

Introduction

Social Studies is one of the Nigerian school subjects which is geared towards the development and education of our young people. Social Studies provide ample opportunities towards the nurturing of different kind of virtues in the life of our young citizens such as self-realization, better human relationships, self and national unity, social and political advancement, scientific and technological development, etc. Social Studies is a course of study that studied human beings in various capacity of his interaction with his fellow counterpart (Osakwe, 2012).

The central focus of this great subject anchors on the promotion of civic competence, integration of knowledge, skills and attitude in resolving societal problems, issues and challenges of the society. It is a discipline that ruminates and explores the dynamic situation of our society and also work towards the changing nature of knowledge among the citizens. Moreover, Social studies foster new and integrated approach which aimed at resolving societal and environmental issues (Imogie, 2010; Akpochafo, 2013). These glorious visions of Social Studies education can be realized by repositioning the subject to accommodate challenges of the present era. This will help in moving the nation forward in order to meet up with new hope of the contemporary society.

The objectives of Citizenship education in relation to Nigerian context in the view of Ezegebe (1988) citing John Nitmeyer (1975) says that the task of citizenship education is to help learners to be socially sensitive, socially responsible, intelligent members of their total school community and their school sub-communities. Again, Douglas (1967) maintains that citizenship education's primary aim is to develop citizens that are useful to the society. According to him, it is in the hands of good citizens that any country's democracy has a chance of survival. By this, it means that the progress of any democratic society rests fundamentally on citizens who are intelligent and normally fit to run their government. Several studies have been carried out on Citizenship education, but not much has been done on the citizenship education as an element of achieving global citizen. The objectives of this study are to review the concept of citizenship

education, global citizen and global citizen's responsibilities and examine how citizenship education has influenced global citizen.

Conceptual Issues

Citizenship education is defined as the process of teaching students, from their early stage, in order for them to become clear-thinking individuals and enlightened Nigerian citizens who will be willing to participate in making decisions that will better the Nigerian society. Knowing the nation's institutions, and having knowledge about the rule of law and what it applies to both the social and human relationships is what actually form an aspect of citizenship education courses. Citizenship education was introduced in order to play some vital roles in advancing the cause of Nigerian society. Since discussing the roles of citizenship education is the focus in this study, there is the need to take a look at the roles citizenship education has played in order to develop Nigeria sociopolitical system.

A global citizen is someone who is aware of and understands the wider world – and their place in it. They take an active role in their community and work with others to make our planet more peaceful, sustainable and fairer. For Oxfam (1997), global citizenship is all about encouraging young people to develop the knowledge, skills and values they need to engage with the world. And it's about the belief that we can all make a difference.

According to Ron (2015), global citizen is someone who sees themselves as part of an emerging sustainable world community, and whose actions support the values and practices of that community. Many people today identify with being global citizens as more and more aspects of their lives become globalized. Being a global citizen does not mean that you have to give up the other citizenship identities you already have, such as, your country citizenship, your allegiance to your local community, religious, or ethnic group. Being a global citizen just means that you have another layer of identity (with the planet as a whole) added on to who you are. Similarly, global citizenship is the idea that everyone, no matter where they live, is part of a worldwide community.

Although your life may not look like the lives of children in other countries, you share similar experiences, like playing games or having a family. Being a global citizen means that you look for these similarities and try to understand how life may be different for other people.

Education for Global Citizenship

Education for global citizenship is not an additional subject – it is a framework for learning, reaching beyond school to the wider community. It can be promoted in class through the existing curriculum or through new initiatives and activities. The benefits are felt across the school and beyond. Global citizenship helps young people to: build their own understanding of world events; think about their values and what’s important to them; take learning into the real world; challenge ignorance and intolerance; get involved in their local, national and global communities; develop an argument and voice their opinions; see that they have power to act and influence the world around them.

According to Oxfam (1997), a global citizen is someone who: is aware of the wider world and has a sense of her or his own role as a world citizen; respects and values diversity; has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically, and environmentally; is outraged by social injustice; participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from local to global; is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place; takes responsibility for his or her actions.

Rights of Global Citizenship

The rights of global citizens are imbedded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, first drafted in 1948 after World War II. The core nature of the Universal Declaration grounded in individual liberty, equality, and equity has remained constant. However, the ways in human rights are applied change over time, with changes that occur in the political, economic and social fabric of society. Also new rights, that were not on the 1948 human rights

agenda have emerged, for example, digital access rights, LGBT rights, and environmental rights. Some people cite the emergence of new rights and changing political systems as calling forth the need for an updated Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The main problem related to human rights has been the difficulties that the world has had in enforcing them. There is a long and shameful history of disrespect for and abuse of human rights on the part of sovereign states, religious institutions, corporations and others. A growing number of international mechanisms have been established for reporting human rights abuses. There also are global, regional, and national courts that exist to adjudicate incidences of human rights abuse. Yet, unfortunately, human rights enforcement mechanisms still have limited legal jurisdiction, and many states have not agreed to participate in them. This is yet another reason for a review and update of our current human rights policies and programs.

Responsibilities of Global Citizenship

A global citizen, living in an emerging world community, has moral, ethical, political, and economic responsibilities. According to Ron (2015), the co-founder and director of the global citizens' initiative, these responsibilities include:

Responsibility to understand one's own perspective and the perspectives of others on global issues: Almost every global issue has multiple ethnic, social, political, and economic perspectives attached to it. It is the responsibility of global citizens to understand these different perspectives and promote problem-solving consensus among the different perspectives and the building of common ground solutions. A global citizen should avoid taking sides with one particular point of view, and instead search for ways to bring all sides together.

Responsibility to respect the principle of cultural diversity: The multiple perspectives that exist with most global issues often are a reflection of different cultural belief systems. Each of our major cultural belief systems brings value-added to our search for solutions

to the global issues we face. In building a sustainable values-based world community it is important to maintain respect for the world's different cultural traditions; to make an effort to bring together the leaders of these different cultural traditions who often have much in common with one another; and to help leaders bring the best elements of their cultures to the task of solving global issues and building world community.

Responsibility to make connections and build relationships with people from other countries and cultures: Global citizens need to reach out and build relationships with people from other countries and cultures. Otherwise, we will continue to live in isolated communities with narrow conflict-prone points of view on global issues. It is quite easy to build global relationships. Most countries, cities, and towns are now populated with immigrants and people from different ethnic traditions. The Internet offers a range of opportunities to connect with people on different issues. So even without traveling abroad (which is a useful thing to do), it is possible to build a network of personal and group cross-country and cultural relationships. Building such networks help those involved better understand their similarities and differences and search for common solutions for the global issues that everyone faces.

Responsibility to understand the ways in which the peoples and countries of the world are inter-connected and inter-dependent: Global citizens have the responsibility to understand the many ways in which their lives are inter-connected with people and countries in different parts of the world. They need for example to understand the ways in which the global environment affects them where they live, and how the environmental lifestyles they choose affect the environment in other parts of the world. They need to understand the ways in which human rights violations in foreign countries affect their own human rights, how growing income inequalities across the world affect the quality of their lives, how the global tide of immigration affects what goes on in their countries.

Responsibility to understand global issues: Global citizens have the responsibility to understand the major global issues that affect their lives. For example, they need to understand the impact of the scarcity of resources on societies; the challenges presented by the current distribution of wealth and power in the world; the roots of conflict and dimensions of peace-building; the challenges posed by a growing global population.

Responsibility to advocate for greater international cooperation with other nations: Global citizens need to play activist roles in urging greater international cooperation between their nation and others. When a global issue arises, it is important for global citizens to provide advice on how their countries can work with other nations to address this issue; how it can work with established international organizations like the United Nations, rather than proceed on a unilateral course of action.

Responsibility for advocating for the implementation of international agreements, conventions, treaties related to global issues: Global citizens have the responsibility to advocate for having their countries ratify and implement the global agreements, conventions, and treaties that they have signed.

Responsibility for advocating for more effective global equity and justice in each of the value domains of the world community: There are a growing number of cross-sector issues that require the implementation of global standards of justice and equity; for example, the global rise in military spending, the unequal access by different countries to technology, the lack of consistent national policies on immigration. Global citizens have the responsibility to work with one another and advocate for global equality and justice solutions to these issues.

The Need for Provision of Information and Communication Technology to Achieve Global Citizens

Today's world embraces global information network. Social studies being a living subject and human related discipline attained to the globalization of any contemporary issues and challenge emanated

in our society. This issues and challenges is no other thing but information and communication and technology. The idea of information and communication technology means a process of creating, processing, storing retrieving, deleting and disseminating information and data using computers and telecommunication (Gele, 2012). It is one of the conditions that is very useful in determining the extent to which a nation participates in the global world is information and communications technology (ICT) (Olibies, 2008). Olibies maintained that information and communication technology is an advance technology that provides a rich globe resource and collaborative environment for disseminating of knowledge and information.

Information and communication technology (ICT) embodied computer, internet electronic mail camera, video, satellite, telecommunication, GSM world-wide website (w.w.w). For citizenship transformation, social studies must be repositioning by the government to meet up the task of providing computer, internet service facilities, computers, laboratories, generators for power supply in case there is no national electrical service as well as training computer literate teachers to teach the learners in the repositioning social studies curriculum in all educational institution in the country (Mbakwem, 2006).

The use of ICT in teaching and learning of social education toward realization citizenship transformation cannot be over emphasized. For instance, Yusuf (2005) serves as a powerful tool in the teaching learning process. Information and communication technology (ICT) have the capacity to accelerate the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge required in motivating the students to learn. It offers the teachers of social studies new role that is preparing learners to manipulate information for solving social and economic problem. Hence, for the sake of citizenship transformation and promotion of socio-political cultural issues and challenges, government, educator's, stake holders of education and curriculum developers has the challenges to ensure that this generation of teachers and learners at the repositioned social studies curriculum in the institution in the country are well prepared to use new teaching methods and materials with the new ICT compliance for learning.

By so doing, it will produce citizens that are hardworking, patriotic and creative in thinking thus promoting socio-political development as well as sustaining national unity in Nigeria (Falaki, 2002; Ede, 2010).

Conclusion

The study has explored the development of global citizens through citizenship education with its implication on global best practice of social studies as a course of study. The study reviewed some relevant concepts in line with research work.

Suggestions

There is need for repositioning social studies education to address the issues and challenges of global citizen and citizenship education: For Nigerian to achieve realities of citizenship development towards promotion of socio-political culture, it is necessary to repositioning social studies education to be in line with the philosophical objectives of education in Nigeria as stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Such as production of effective citizens for Nigeria through the school system, designing curriculum from teacher centered to learner centered, provision of adequate qualified teachers and provision of information and communication technology.

Provision of adequate qualified teachers: Government should tackle this challenges and issues by providing trained teachers who possessed certain knowledge, understanding and perspectives of social studies which are in accordance with the deals of good citizenship. Global citizenship education should be included to the higher school curriculum as a course of study: For better understanding of the concept of global citizens and the right and responsibilities of global citizens, government and educational policy makers should incorporate it into the social studies course. Teachers of Social Studies should try as much as possible to make the class lively in order to solve the problem of period boredomness on the part of the learners in the teaching and learning process.

References

- Akpochafo, W. P. (2013). Are best pedagogical practices in social studies really the best. In A lead paper presented at the 29th National Conference of Social Studies Educators Association of Nigeria (SOSCEAN) at the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, 15th-19th July.
- Douglass, M. P. (1967). *Social Studies: From theory to practice in elementary education*. Lippincott.
- Ede, E. O. (2010). Assessment of internet-browsing skills of undergraduate university of Nigeria Nsukka: in preparing for the 21st century globalization. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 10(2) 30-37.
- Ezegbe, M. O. (1988). *Foundations of Social Studies*, Aba: Danton (Publishers).
- Falaki, O. S. (2002). Information technology in Nigeria new or never. Inaugurated lecture series 29 delivered on the 28th February at Federal University of Technology Minna.
- Gele, A. M. (2012). Repositioning Social Studies in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies*, 15(2), 23-19.
- Mbakwem, J. N. (2006). Determining new Social Studies teacher effectiveness curriculum delivery. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 18(1), 135-142.
- Olibies, E. I. (2008). Application of information and communication (ICT) in English language classroom. *Nigeria Journal of Teacher Education and Teaching*, 5(1) 17-23.
- Osakwe, E. (2012). Needed paradigm shift for Repositioning Social Studies Education to meet the vision 20-20-10 challenges in Nigeria. Keynote Address by Professor Emman Osakwe, Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka.
- Oxfam, C. P. (1997), What Is global citizenship? Retrieved from: www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/globciti/whatis.htm
- Yusuf, M. O. (2005). Information and communication technology and education: Analysing the Nigerian national policy for information technology. *International Education Journal*, 6(3), 316-321.