

Citizenship Education in Nigerian Schools: Social Studies Approach

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Abstract: This study examined the conceptual meaning of a citizen and citizenship education. It explained the term "citizen" as one who possess numerous benefits and duties; rights/privileges; responsibilities as well as obligations due to his or her emergence as a member of a country either by birth or nationalization. In like manner, the study posited citizenship education as an educational concept that foster the transmission and inculcation of citizenship values, skills and knowledge to the individual citizenry so as to re-orient, re-organize and revolve the individual citizenry who in one form or the other or for one reason or the other deviated from who they should become. The expectations of every citizen is to possess a positive mind characterized with patriotism and nationalism that aid them contribute meaningfully to the country's growth and development. The study envisaged Social Studies as an educational discipline that strives to solve man's diverse problems and re-orient man towards development; it posited the Social Studies discipline as an effectively discipline that can teach citizenship education concept in schools because its content surrounds it. The study also posited problems associated with the teaching of Social Studies in schools as well as the objectives of citizenship education in schools and the role Social Studies teachers play in the effective dissemination of citizenship education.

Keywords: Citizen and citizenship education, effective dissemination.

1. INTRODUCTION

The terms "citizenship" and "citizen" are terms mostly utilized; spoken and written, referenced and acknowledged by most individuals, still they pose ignorant of the benefit, duties, right morals and privilege associate with the terms as elicited in their enacted laws guiding and protecting them. As a citizen one is characterize with numerous benefit and as well numerous obligation attached, the fear of the unknown had facilitated them to shy away from their citizenship right and duties as well benefits. Most subjects of the society are ignorant of their citizenship right and duties due to their negative concept they inherited from their ancestors, the Nigerian society is a matter of fact due to observation, a lawless society despite the incessant enactment of bills to laws, there is poor implementation of measures, and this has aided the loss of citizenship right and duties. This lawlessness in the Nigerian state is facilitated by the greedy and corrupt concepts of Nigerians [Both the elites and masses]. The Nigerian elites are corrupt like-wise the masses as both group can encompass what ever medium no matter the constraint just to earn a living. This act posed by Nigerians had evolved a threat to citizenship right, duties and benefits.

Nigeria recently, is an unsafe geographical location for individuals to dwell in as most Nigerian citizens seek abode in foreign countries. This is as a result of numerous corrupt practices, terrorist attacks, assassinations, kidnappings, armed-robberies among other that had and still positing grave consequences and effects on the Nigeria populace. It is so rare to observe individuals posing themselves as bonafide citizens of Nigeria as they prefer to be address as foreign citizens and this has evolved various set backs in investing in Nigeria resources as most Nigerian and other foreign investors seek abode of business elsewhere. The zeal of being an effective and patriotic citizen is no where to be found in Nigeria as most Nigerians antagonize national values, ethics and norms but posit the survival for the fittest, that whatsoever and wherever that can aid his or her survival is encouraged despising the means of attaining such survival vis-à-vis the

Nigerian illegal process of attaining political leadership despising the de-franchised fellows, destruction of properties and prestige of the country. These are no way close to being a patriotic citizen; A patriotic citizen is one who is patriotic in all his or her endeavors as well his or her actions that are characterized with positive attributes that aid and develop the country's affairs and economy; A patriotic citizen encompass perseverance till the establishment and achievement of the goals and aims of the country.

The phenomenon of unpatriotic citizenry is a social problem affecting all countries of the globe as they all sought for means to curbing the ugly phenomenon. The united state of America according to Osakwe and Itedjere (2005) in the bid to curb this ugly phenomenon explored for discipline that can teach citizenship education i.e a discipline that can teach her citizenry of the national values, integrity, patriotism, nationalism as well as the right type of attitudes, morals, norms as well as skills that can aid the attainment of the American national values, integrity and growth. Social studies as a discipline was officially adopted by the National Education Association in 1916, it was taught in form of courses in secondary schools in USA; this was as a result of the need to re-orient her citizenry from the negative attitudes, concepts and constructs that the American citizens possessed from the first world war. The success of social studies in disseminating citizenship education in USA paved way for its emergence in other countries though Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2013) antagonized this view by positing that social studies never evolved in USA first, that social studies is as old as man, it is a discipline that evolve as a society evolves, it does not need official introduction.

Social studies in Nigeria was also introduced in relation to its introduction in USA, the Nigeria people assimilated the culture of the colonial masters and this made them to hinder their participation in the Nigerian indigenous culture and as well most deviated in acting and contributing to Nigeria as a country as they where greedy-conscious and fame-conscious, they detested patriotism and nationalism but took political leadership for their selfish interests. The presence of this menace paved way for the introduction of citizenship education to re-orient Nigeria citizenry of the urgent need of patriotism and nationalism among the citizenry The promising fate of the discipline to inculcate citizenship education in Nigerians received a boost when various agencies sponsored and supported social studies in Nigeria.

Citizenship education has been utilized as a tool for achieving social cohesion and unified national identity. It is a concept that most countries have encompassed; for example, the 1975-1989 civil war in Lebanon, the 1989 peace Accords in Ta' if emphasized the role of education for peace and social unity. Attention was given to the unification of the history and civics textbooks which according to Frayha (2004,P.170), are most explicitly related to identity formation. (as posited by Basel, 2006).

Citizenship education according to Lau (2011) has been extensively researched in many countries (citing Torney-Purta, Schwill and Amadeo, 1999). It is now possible to identify a consensus that citizenship education can be used as a vehicle for social change and as a way of preventing certain social problems (Pinson, 2007; Pearce and Hallgarten, 2000), However, the nation of citizenship is still a contested, multifaceted and complex concept which embodies diverse meanings in different societies and eras (Mclaughlin, 1992 cited by Lau, 2011).

Citizenship education entails the dissemination and comprehension of education between an individual instructor and individual learners respectively over the rationale of being a citizen as well as the tasks. It is an knowledge transferred from the instructor to the students over citizenship right and duties. Moreover, citizenship education can be defined as educating children from children-hood through adolescence to adult-hood to become rationale thinkers and enlightened citizens who participate and encompass meaningful decisions and contributions that can aid the growth and development of the country. Okogu and Umudjere (2014) posited citizenship education as a process of preparing and equipping Nigerian citizens for better internalization of true democracy for them to be legally minded and socially inclined in practicing and exercising their right and duties without fear and ignorance.

Mokwunye (1991) sees citizenship education as a conscious process of inculcating certain values, habits, skills and attitudes which the society considers desirable and essential for his survival as a unit and for a country's institutional knowledge as well as the rule of law that agitates social and human relationship that pose as citizenship education. UNESCO (1998) posited that citizenship education is based on the distinction between the individual as a subject of ethics and laws, entitled to all the inherent rights in the human condition and the citizen entitled to the civil and political right recognized by the national constitution of the country. It further explained that all human beings are both individuals and citizens of the society they belong; therefore, human rights and citizens are interdependent. Subjectively, citizenship education has the purpose of educating future citizens, thus, it must necessarily address children, young people and adults

who are living beings, having the status of human beings endowed with conscience and reason excluding individual differences (UNESCO, 1998). UNESCO (1998) also stated that the trend towards self reliance of nations made it inevitable that the citizenry be aware, involved and participatory in country's affairs. This has emanated the Nigerian government to posit numerous programmes aimed at mass mobilization and awareness orientation; these programmes include the war Against indiscipline (WAI), National orientation movement, (NOM), Mass mobilization for Economic Recovery, Social Justice and Self-Reliance (MAMSER), National Orientation Agency and the War Against indiscipline and corruption (WAIC).

The need to overhaul a country's negative concept and affairs agitate the inculcation of the desired values, attitudes, awareness and patriotism to reflect the new political outlook that can enhance the growth and development of the nation. It was part of this reason that Social Studies was introduced as a school subject in Nigerian schools; thus a means of solving social problems of Nigerians.

Social Studies is intricately interwoven with citizenship education; it has so much to do with the development of civic and citizenship knowledge, attitudes, values and skills. The primary and overriding purpose of Social Studies Education right from its inception is citizenship education (Osakwe and Itedjere, 2005).

2. ROLE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS IN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Globally, teachers are the foundation of every successful nation. They are the bed-rock of any country's success and achievements. They sacrifice their time, energy and resources to ascertain their subjects are knowledgeable of whatever subjects' matter that is involved. They agitate and encompass numerous resources, techniques and approaches to create an impact in the society they belong (Okogu and Umudjere, 2015b). In a nutshell, they are nation-builders.

Social Studies as an educational discipline possess teachers who teach the subject in schools, they are other-wise referred to as societal consultants or doctors. They expose, identify and solve man's problems; thus, they inculcate these instincts they possess in their learners (Okogu and Umudjere, 2015b). The Social Studies teacher as a societal consultant play an important role in citizenship education as they pose as role models that exhibit whatever they teach the students. Okogu and Umudjere (2015b) explained that the Social Studies teachers antagonize the corrupt societal values, greedy-conscious individuals and other negative values that the individual students have possessed before their arrival to the social studies lesson; as they encompasses pedagogic skills to impart the right type of national values, belief, morals, norms, and ethics in the students.

Social studies teachers are machineries that can aid the attainment of citizenship education in Nigeria because they are sole teaching personnels that can transmit the right type of values, attitudes, beliefs morals and norms needed for a good citizen to contribute and support her country.

3. OBJECTIVE OF CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Citizenship education is one of the basic concepts of social studies education in Nigerian schools and it holds a high remark towards the effective dissemination of the social studies content. Citizenship education as a concept of social studies has the following objectives:

- To transmit cultural values and ethics, patriotic altitudes and attributes that pose as necessities for societal growth and development to individual students;
- To inculcate national consciousness and understanding of national social problems and prospects of the national economy to the individual students;
- To avail the prospects of patriotism and nationalism to the individual students;
- To ascertain the need of national cohesion and integration as well as citizens' role to play in nation-building to the individual students and
- To create awareness of recent and contemporary trends and the rationale for participation and mobilization of the country's resources for the good of the citizens in the individuals students.

4. PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Nigeria is a pluralistic society in which different ethics, values, norms and ideologies are allowed to exist in teaching desirable values and attitudes in citizenship education. This pose as a problem facing the dissemination and comprehension of citizenship education in schools. The diverse nature of Nigeria religions and cultures provided by the country's constitution elicit a variety of diverse views geared towards the comprehension of the individual students which pose as a constraint in the effective teaching of citizenship education.

The nature of parental background also affect the teaching of citizenship education; as some parental neglects or grave sufferings they experienced from the government in the past like in the case of the Biafra civil war, thus antagonize their beliefs and views of the Nigerian state. It posits measures whereby whatever a child is taught in school is modified by his or her parents at home, the parents change such concepts to favour their own initial motives and beliefs. This act poses as a challenge to the effective teaching of citizenship education in schools.

Further more; Gerry and Una (2008) cited in Okogu and Umudjere (2015b) posited the following as challenges facing citizenship education in schools:

- The incessant syllabus change
- The time challenge
- The turnover challenge
- The cross-circular challenge
- The community challenge

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Citizenship education provides a vital role in nation-building, it does not only reveal the broad aims of the country and impart the right type of values, attitudes, beliefs, norms as envisaged in the Social Studies content, but also encompass the preparation and equipping the young students into positive minded citizens that can contribute to nation-building.

Based on the conclusion as above; the following recommendations are made:

- Citizenship education as a vital tool for national cohesion and national identity should be taught in Nigerian schools to foster Nigerians' national cohesion and identity.
- The various potentials characterized in citizenship education is obviously elicited in the Social Studies content, thus, the Social Studies discipline due to its macro-scopic content and sole-aim of teaching citizenship education, should be effectively disseminated by qualified Social Studies teachers to help teach citizenship education in Nigerian schools.
- A successful attainment of the citizenship education is attributed to the Social Studies teachers who pose as a social consultants, doctors and instructors characterize with the zeal to explore, identify and solve man's problems. Thus, the ministry of education should be impartial in recruiting Social Studies teachers.
- Incessant Social Studies syllabus change should be discouraged but establishment of a standard syllabus that will suit civic education should be encouraged
- There should be pride in teaching Social Studies not picking up the teaching of Social Studies as an occupation just to earn a living but to disseminate citizenship values, skills and knowledge.

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