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SOCIAL STUDIES AND CIVIC EDUCATION: IS THERE ANY POINT OF CONTACT?

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Abstract

This study investigated a point of contact between Social Studies and Civic Education as school subjects from the point of academic performance of the Kwara state upper basic school students. A survey descriptive design was adopted. A total of 515 upper basic two (2) Students were randomly selected from Kwara State. The respondents' promotion scores in Social Studies and Civic Education were collected and standardized, since they were scored from teacher-made tests across the sampled schools. The standardised scores were used for analysis of this study. Mean and standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyse the standardised data (scores). Findings showed above average performance by the respondents both in Social Studies and Civic Education. Also, a significant positive relationship was found between Kwara state upper basic school students' performance in Social studies and Civic Education. A symbiotic relationship was therefore concluded to exist between the two subjects. It was, therefore, recommended that the two

subjects should continue to be taught to students at basic school levels as this will serve as a good foundation for better performance in Civic Education at Senior Secondary school levels.

Keywords: Civic education, senior secondary, upper basic, and point of contact

Word count: 190

Introduction

There is no doubt that both Social Studies and Civic education have found their ways into the Nigerian School System. These have come to be accepted as school subjects with the primary responsibility of inculcating desirable values and civic responsibility in the learners at all levels. This became necessary as a result of lack of civic education and patriotic orientation which has led to disorientation in schools and the larger society. The consequences are being felt at all strata of our society.

Social Studies was introduced into school to solve societal problems which all other social sciences subjects could not take care of, while Civic Education was considered as a sub-set of Social Studies. According Lawal, and Oyeleye, (2003). Civic Education was introduced with the main aim of preparing Nigerian citizens for democratic society and development. In this sense, Civic Education can be defined as educational, learning or professional activities carried out to enable people to understand the ideas of democracy, develop a reasoned commitment to the values and principles of democracy, be motivated to identify with areas of the political process they can participate, and what they can do to influence political outcome, and thereby, improve the quality of government and governance (Olayemi, Abayomi, & Olatunde, 2011). It cultivates a citizenry which participates in the public life of a democracy, uses their rights and to discharge their responsibilities with the necessary civic knowledge and skills.

On the other hand, Social Studies can be described as a discipline which attempts to modify or change the learners' behaviours in the directions of acceptable values and attitudes through a process of studying human beings' relationships with their environment; the

desire to provide solutions to the various complementing problems in order to ensure their survival, having been equipped with the necessary tools such as values, attitudes, skills and knowledge, Lawal & Oyeleye (2003).

To many social educators, the roles of Social Studies and Civic Education are to complement each other; in that case, they are both thought to children in the school. However, Iyewarun, Keene, Baamphatla, & Moffat, (2013) submitted that they both seek to check corruption, stimulate political participation, provide citizenship and leadership education, promote political democratic culture, promote national unity and integration, promote economic development, encourage free flow of information, promote political democratic culture, check abuse of power, and promote mutual understanding and tolerance.

Moreover, the teaching of Civic Education and Social Studies will prepare children and youths by imparting positive values and attitudes which will make them better citizens in the future. If these are their roles in the life of every Nigeria student, it becomes imperative that they are not quite different from each other. Back to the memory lane, when civic education was first introduced as a school subject, the education planners handed the responsibility of teaching civic education to the Social Studies teachers. Their main reason was that there are no differences between the two subjects. The issue of training or recruiting separate teachers to teach civic education in school does not arise and up till date; no Nigerian teacher education college or University trains teachers in Civic Education.

It is on the basis of this that this paper investigated the level of similarities in the performances of the two school subjects.

Literature Review

The emergence of Social Studies education in the Nigerian school's curriculum was part of a general culture and values response to the problems of neglect of societal culture and values. It was seen as a necessary and veritable tool after the Civil War to help rebuild the battered nation and to reverse colonial education which did not appreciate and accommodate Nigeria's cherished culture and values (Igu, 2009).

Social Studies as an integrated discipline has been equipped with the necessary vital tools for promoting and sustaining culture and values in the society (Mbaba, 2008). The concept of Social Studies as a subject of study has been variously defined. The United States of America Commission on the Rehabilitation of secondary education defined Social Studies as "subject matter that is related to the organisation and development of the human society and man as a member of social groups". Kissock in Mbaba, (2006) defined Social Studies as "a programme of study which a society uses to instill in students or learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes and action it considers important concerning the relationship human beings have with each other, their world and themselves". The definition above suggested that Social Studies is a vehicle through which desired culture, values and norms of the society are inculcated in its young ones. National Teachers Institute (2000) conceptualised Social Studies as a subject that deals with man's interaction with his environment in order for him to acquire the relevant skills, knowledge, attitudes and value that will make him live harmoniously with his environment.

When the definitions above are sieved, it would be understood that the following important facts emerged: Social Studies is a subject that is geared towards the inculcation of skills, attitudes and values for national development. It ensures the acquisition of knowledge which helps man to adapt to and subdue his environment. In line with the views above, Ezeigbo in Igu, (2009) sums up Social Studies as that school subject which helps man to develop valuable and socially acceptable concepts, ideals and philosophy of life. It helps man develop proper value judgment and ability to criticize, select and place events in the proper perspectives. Lastly, it helps Nigerian teachers, pupils and students to discover what is good and unique in the physical, social, economic environments which hitherto have been neglected.

The situation today makes it look like Social Studies has failed or still finds it very difficult to achieve or produce the calibre of citizens required in the society. There is still a prevalence of corruption, indiscipline, disrespect (for both elders and the rule of law), kidnapping, terrorism, indifference to duty, which are some

of the manifestations of negative trends in the Nigerian society are clear examples. Events of the recent past have indicated that Nigeria is facing the threat of losing its much-cherished sense of nationhood, cultural identity and indeed, hospitable spirit (Adeniran, 2010). There is, therefore, the need for urgent value re-orientation because of their far-reaching impact on national development. To do these, the school has a great role to play. Part of this is the introduction of civic education, thus, necessitating the introduction of Civic Education in the Nigerian primary and secondary schools.

According to Darling- Hammon and Bransford, (2005), Civic Education is described as a system of education that inculcates sound moral values in the youths. It is an educational system which aims to help people learn how to become active, informed and responsible citizens. Civic education remains an important means of teaching the populace about individuals right and what duties and responsibilities the leader and the led have.

Supporting this view, Ritter, Powell and Hawley (2007) observed that the introduction of Civic Education is to teach citizens the virtues of good citizenship particularly the values of obedience, humility and submission to constituted authority. Civic Education will deepen democratic culture and encourage qualitative participation of average Nigeria in the government process. McCully and Marks (2004) observed that civic education will provide a basis for the understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Nigeria's constitution and a framework for competent and responsible participation.

Social Studies and Civic Education: Point of Contact

A Social Studies educator expects civic education and Social Studies to meet in the process of doing the following to learners:

- a. Promote in them the ethics of good and responsible citizenship. In this case, learners are more likely to commit themselves to active citizenship, particularly if they are effectively taught some concepts that are related and fall within the context of human problems of survival (Ikaye, 2004).
- b. Cognition of knowledge which is part of Social Studies is also capable of assisting the learners to assess the implications of

- conditions within their immediate social environments (family, school, religious) for making and implementing decisions to achieve their personal goals.
- c. Effective teaching of Social Studies also assists learners greatly in the appreciation of the contributions of individuals and groups to ever changing cultural heritage (Leming, Ellington, & Schug, 2006).
 - d. Learning Social Studies is a source of inspiration in children to love their country and appreciate their natural heritage. For instance, the emphasis on the subject for the teacher to expose the learners to national symbols and heroes/heroines can effectively facilitate the desire in them to show more appreciation for their country (Engle & Ochoa, 1988).
 - e. Social Studies is also a discipline aimed at providing humanistic education. By this, it facilitates in learners, an opportunity to better comprehend things around them. The subject should help the learners to understand their experiences and find meaning in life (Leming, Ellington, & Schug, 2006).
 - f. The discipline equally prepares the learners for social responsibility in order that they may perpetuate and enhance their society through the knowledge of the heritage of the society to which they belong, its dominant social values and political economic life (Galston, 2004).
 - g. A good Social Studies programme is aimed at helping learners to acquire analytical ideas and problem-solving skills. Through the subject, learners should be able to acquire basic skills not only those of listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as calculation but also those associated with the ability to observe, analyse critically and make a reasoned judgment. It is therefore not out of place to conclude here that Social Studies is a discipline established with the sole aim of helping the learners to acquire social, intellectual, and psychomotor skills for the purpose of making them independent learners and functional human citizens of their country.
 - h. Equip individuals in a society with the basic rules and institutional features of democratic political systems and

knowledge about working of government, constitution, processes of public affairs, democratic rights and practices and the role of citizens (Hahn, 2010);

- i. Inculcate a specific set of civic values and principles essential to the nurturing of a democratic culture, such as tolerance, trust in the democratic processes, respect for rule of law;
- j. Enable the citizens to understand, respect and promote democratic values;
- k. Create an environment that encourages individuals as well as collective, responsible and informed participation in social and political process at the national, local and grassroots levels (Galston, 2004).

There is a popular argument by the social studies scholars and educators that there is little or no significant difference between social studies and civic education, they both share contents, methodology aims and even teachers implementing their curriculum. Yet if all these are similar, what about the performance of students in these two school subjects? Based on this fact, students' performance in the two subjects should predict each other; meaning that if a student could score A1 Social studies, such as student should also be able to make A1 or at least B2 in Civic education. This is the main thrust of this paper. Researchers such as Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2013) on A Comparative study of secondary school students' performance in English and Social Studies in Junior Secondary Schools in Osun State, Nigeria, found a significant difference in students' performance in English and Social Studies. This means that the performance of students in the English Language differs significantly from that of Social Studies. Also, the study of Awoniyi and Awoniyi (2015) on Comparative analysis of students' Scores in Social Studies and Integrated Science at Junior Secondary school Certificate Examination in Edu local government Area of Kwara state, Nigeria revealed that there existed significant differences in the performances of students in both Social Studies and Integrated Science. This means that the scores of students in Social Studies were significantly different from those of Integrated

Science. Dania (2015) studied Civic Education as a collaborative dimension of Social Studies education in the attainment of political ethics in Nigeria. The finding revealed that there is no significant difference in the opinion of Social Studies teachers on Civic Education as a collaborative dimension of Social Studies Education in the attainment of political ethics. This means that all the respondents are of the opinion that Civic Education is a collaborative study of social studies.

In the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) study, 9th graders in the United States were assessed on two civic knowledge subscales, civic content and civic skills as well as Social studies knowledge and Orientation. On civic education in general, the students scored significantly above the international average on the total civic knowledge scale when compared with the means score of social studies knowledge." In civic content, the students' average scores "did not differ significantly from the international mean" when compared with that of social studies students and in civic skills (i.e., interpretive skills), U. S. students "performed significantly higher than the international mean on the civic skills subscale" when compared with the means of social studies students on social orientation skills.

None of the studies above compared the performances of Social Studies and Civic Education students in Upper Basic School in Kwara State, in order to establish whether there is any point of contact between Social Studies and Civic Education as school subjects.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigates whether there is a relationship between the performance of upper basic students in Social Studies and Civic Education. Specifically, the study investigated:

- a. The general performance of Kwara state upper basic students in Social Studies.
- b. The general performance of Kwara state upper basic students in Civic Education
- c. Whether there is a significant relationship between the performance of Kwara state upper basic students in Social Studies and Civic Education.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- a. What is the general performance of Kwara state upper basic students in social studies?
- b. What is the general performance of Kwara state upper basic students in civic education?
- c. Is there any relationship between Kwara state upper basic students' performance in social studies and civic education?

Research Hypothesis

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between the Kwara State upper basic students' performance in social studies and civic education.

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. All the Kwara State Upper Basic Three students were the study's target population. Five hundred and fifteen Kwara State Upper basic three students were randomly selected for the study across the State. A proforma was used to collect the samples promotion scores in Social Studies and Civic Education from the teachers in charge of the two subjects. The collected scores were standardised using T-score since they are scores from teacher-made test from various selected schools in Kwara State. The collected data after being standardised was analysed with both descriptive and inferential statistics at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the general performance of Kwara state upper basic students in social studies?

Student's promotion scores in Social Studies were standardized, summed and subjected to descriptive analysis on Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of Kwara state upper basic students' performance in Social Studies

Subject	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Social Studies	515	34	62	52.84	7.06

Table 1 showed respondents' minimum, maximum and mean performance of 34, 62 and 52.84, respectively, with a standard deviation of 7.06. It implies that the Kwara state upper basic II students performed above average in Social Studies.

Research Question Two: What is the general performance of Kwara state upper basic students in Civic Education?

Student's promotion scores in Civic Education were standardized, summed and subjected to descriptive analysis on Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of Kwara state upper basic students' performance in Civic Education

Subject	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Civic Education	515	24	100	59.73	24.56

Table 2 revealed respondents' minimum, maximum and mean performance of 24, 100 and 59.73, respectively, with a standard deviation of 24.56. It implies that the Kwara state upper basic students II equally performed above average in Civic Education.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between the Kwara State upper Basic students' performance in social studies and civic education.

The collected and standardised scores of the sampled students in both Social Studies and Civic Education were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in Table 3.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of respondents' performance in Social Studies and Civic Education.

Variable	N	r-value	p-value
Students' Performances	515	.73	.000

Table 3 showed R-value of .73 which is significant at 0.05 alpha level. This implies a positive significant relationship in respondents' performance in Social Studies and Civic Education. The hypothesis is therefore, rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the Kwara State upper basic school students' performance in social studies and civic education.

Discussion

It was found out that the Kwara State upper basic II students had the mean performance of 52.84 and 59.73 in Social Studies and Civic Education, respectively. This connotes above average performance in the two subjects by the respondents. The similarity in performance, as found out in this study, may not be unconnected with the fact that the same teachers teach the two subjects in sampled schools. This finding negates the findings of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) conducted on 9th graders in the United States which revealed that students scores in the general knowledge of Civic Education are significantly above the international average when compared with the means score of Social Studies knowledge. While it also supports the findings in terms of the civic content of the students' with an average score, there is no significant difference from the international mean when compared with that of the means of social studies students.

The study revealed a positive moderate significant relationship between the *Kwara state* upper basic II students' performance in social studies and Civic Education. This finding authenticates some Social Studies scholars and educators' (Iyewarun, Keene, Baamphattha, & Moffat's, (2013) and Dania's (2015) argument that there is little or no significant difference between Social Studies and Civic Education, since they share contents, methodology, aims

and even teachers. Also, the finding corroborates the submission of Dania (2015) that no significant difference was found in the opinion of Social Studies teachers on Civic Education as a collaborative dimension of Social Studies Education in the attainment of political ethics.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study it could be concluded that a symbiotic relationship exists between Social Studies and Civic Education as school subjects. On this basis, it is recommended that they should continue to be taught to students in basic school levels as the knowledge will serve as solid foundation for better performance in Civic Education at Senior Secondary Level.

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