

IMPLEMENTATION OF CIVIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM AT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS: NEED TO INCORPORATE E-LEARNING STRATEGIES

Dr. TAHIR A. ABUBAKAR^{1*}

¹Department of Education Foundations,
College of Education, Open and Distance Learning,
Kampala International University, Uganda

Dr. OTENIYA MOJEED GBENGA²

²Department of Science & Vocational Education, College of Education,
Al-Qalam University Katsina. Katsina State, Nigeria.

*Corresponding Author Email: - abduldbt1@gmail.com

Abstract

Success or failure of every education system largely dependants on the quality of implementation of the curriculum. This study is aimed at studying implementation of civic education curriculum at senior secondary schools and the essential needs to incorporate e-learning strategies in order to meet up with the 21st digital era learning system. Senior secondary schools have been for long confronted with several problems which include failure to adequately incorporate e-Learning Strategies as an alternative to the commonly used physical learning situation in the implementation of civic education curriculum. The problem has undoubtedly resulted set back especially during the period which the entire world witnessed Corona Virus global pandemic, and that faults the process of civic education curriculum implementation in our senior secondary schools. Thus, the quest of alternative to curriculum implementation becomes necessary as to create enabling and smooth curriculum implementation processes. Therefore, involvement of e-learning in the curriculum implementation of civic education becomes paramount importance in schools. This paper discusses the need to incorporate e-learning teaching in the implementation of Civic Education Curriculum (CEC) as to achieve uninterrupted success and achievement of the subject (CEC) in senior secondary schools. The paper also described the concept of civic education, the relevant of e-learning teaching strategies that can be best consider and adopt in the delivery of civic education curriculum at the aforementioned level. Similarly, the paper discussed and highlighted importance and benefits of e-learning in the implementation strategies of civic education curriculum. Nevertheless, the paper proposed some useful and workable suggestions on how best the E-Learning Teaching Strategies can be optimally utilized and handled in the delivery of civic education in senior secondary schools.

Keywords: Implementaion of Civic Education, Curriculum, E-Learning Strategies.

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Introduction

Since independence, Nigeria has struggled to achieve sustainable national development, particularly in the implementation of civic education curricula. The importance of unity among ethnic groups is emphasized in civic education, and a lack of adequate knowledge in this subject can lead to ignorance among students. Incorporating e-learning into the teaching and learning of civic education in senior secondary schools can significantly enhance the effectiveness of curriculum implementation (Crisolo & Danilo, 2017). Doggoh (2007) argued that understanding civic education helps students become more familiar with societal norms and values, both of their own community and others. The quality, devotion, and effectiveness of

civic education teachers are crucial to the success of the educational system, as no system is stronger than its teachers (Fareo, 2015). A teacher, as defined by Gloria (2016), is someone with the knowledge, skills, and specialized training necessary for teaching, explaining, and educating.

Evaluation in civic education generally refers to assessing a subject, project, or program against its stated objectives (Srinivas, 2018). It is essential for transforming quantitative data into qualitative interpretations to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of an educational program (Chinonso, 2014). According to Okwelle (2014), the delivery of high-quality instruction in civic education heavily depends on the quality and competence of the teachers. Civic education teachers are expected to guide, direct, evaluate, impart knowledge, and facilitate learning, especially when integrating e-learning into the curriculum. Teachers must be proficient and current in e-learning to effectively implement the civic education curriculum. Competencies in e-learning are crucial for successful curriculum implementation. The impact of teacher competence on student learning highlights its significance for civic education. As Gloria (2016) noted, specific cognitive abilities, e-learning skills, and personality traits determine how effectively teachers can deliver high-quality instruction, thereby fostering student learning. Teachers' pedagogical content knowledge positively influences student outcomes (Kunter, Thilo, Klusman, & Richter, 2013). Measures of teacher preparation and certification, coupled with high levels of e-learning skills, are strong predictors of student achievement in reading and civic education (Gloria, 2016).

The effectiveness of teaching competence is closely linked to the quality of teacher education programs available for primary and secondary school teachers. In Nigeria, a significant issue with teacher education for post-primary schools is the low quality of teachers produced by Teachers' Colleges and their limited skills in e-learning for curriculum implementation (Obot, 2014). A competent civic education teacher, who is proficient in e-learning, is expected to implement the civic education curriculum effectively to achieve the stated educational objectives (Gloria, 2016). Teachers should possess pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. They must continually innovate in e-learning to enhance their ability to deliver educational materials in line with current scientific and technological advancements (Owen & Roger, 2015).

Ebiringa (2012) emphasized the critical role of teachers in implementing educational policies using e-learning skills, noting that while education facilitates modernization, the key to its success lies with the teacher. The outcomes in the classroom, especially in civic education, depend on the teacher's capabilities. Successful implementation of any educational program requires teachers to have the necessary competencies, including e-learning skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes. Moreover, a professional civic education teacher in Nigeria must recognize the importance of having reliable and effective attitudes in their teaching. According to Mazana, Montero, and Casmir (2019), a person's attitude is their learned tendency to respond positively or negatively to an object, situation, concept, or individual.

This paper reviews relevant documents to discuss the implementation of civic education for effective citizenship, peace, and national unity in Nigeria.

Concept of E-Learning

The use of e-learning among senior secondary school students is becoming widely acceptable in education section. Miles (2006) define e-learning as a method used in providing training and development to the Students through various electronic media such as the Internet, audio, video, etc. E-Learning is the process of sharing knowledge through various channels such as e-books, CDs, webinars, and more. It has revolutionized the conventional method of chalk and board style of learning imparted to the students. Unlike this, e-Learning education makes giving and receiving simpler, more prolific, and productive. Civic education teachers apply the method of teaching purely through the latest technology.

Importance and Utilization of E-Learning in Curriculum Implementation

Mazana, Montero, and Casmir (2019) identified several key benefits and uses of e-learning in the teaching and learning of civic education:

- i. **Enhanced Accessibility:** E-learning empowers civic education learners to receive basic schooling and develop skills at their own convenience and preferred times, enabling flexible learning opportunities.
- ii. **Accelerated Learning:** The application of e-learning helps civic education students grasp lessons more effectively and at a faster pace.
- iii. **Improved Learning Environment:** According to psychological research, the audio-visual methods used in e-learning foster a more disciplined learning environment, enhancing engagement between tutors and students.
- iv. **Advanced Skill Development:** E-learning allows both teachers and students to develop advanced learning skills, such as creating and selling eBooks, thereby advancing their educational practices.
- v. **Facilitated Knowledge Sharing:** E-learning platforms bring together learners, tutors, experts, and other stakeholders, promoting effective knowledge sharing and collaboration within the field of civic education.

The above reasons have gone a long way in helping learners to acquire required skills in the world of e-learning which in turn have also enhanced their academic performance.

Benefits of Utilization of E-Learning in Civic Education

Students of civic education can significantly benefit from the use of e-learning. According to Redding (2014), the advantages of e-learning in civic education include:

- i. **Convenient Access**:** E-learning allows students to access relevant and easily available content at their own convenience, fulfilling the need for flexible and personalized learning.
- ii. **Teacher Flexibility:** Teachers benefit from greater flexibility in delivering lessons, adapting to various teaching methods and schedules.
- iii. **Accommodates Diverse Needs:** Online learning can cater to the diverse needs of all learners, providing a customizable educational experience.
- iv. **Location and Timing Flexibility:** Classes can be conducted from any location and at times that suit both students and tutors, enhancing accessibility.

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- v. **Exclusive Content Access:** E-learning provides access to exclusive, prolific, and updated content with secure and uninterrupted availability.
 - vi. **Alignment with Modern Trends:** E-learning keeps pace with current educational trends and modern learners, ensuring that content and methods are up-to-date.
 - vii. **Efficient Delivery:** E-learning enables quick and efficient lesson delivery, eliminating delays associated with traditional classroom settings.
 - viii. **Scalability and Consistency:** Learning, content, and duration can be measured and adjusted to suit individual needs, allowing for a consistent and comfortable learning experience.
 - ix. **Cost-Effectiveness: E-learning reduces costs related to long training periods, infrastructure, stationery,** and travel expenses, making education more affordable.
 - x. **Effective Knowledge Transfer:** E-learning enhances the effectiveness of knowledge transfer, making information easier to grasp and retain through well-planned audio-visual materials.
 - xi. **Increased Mobility:** E-learning offers the convenience of revisiting missed lessons and accessing course materials from any location, making it a flexible and affordable option for continuous learning.

All the above mentioned benefits have greatly help to equipped civic education students in so much that the students have become more independent to learn on their own through the use of e-learning method.

Advantages of E-Learning for Students

Unlike the traditional method of teaching with board and chalk, E-learning is fulfilled with the online mode of learning as the students can learn at their comfort and requirements.

Anderson (2004) identified the following as advantages of e-learning to students:

- i. Students can access the study material unlimited times.
- ii. Students can study Courses anytime and anywhere.
- iii. Students can access updated content when they want.
- iv. Unlike the traditional method of teaching, e-learning has a quick mode of delivery. This indicates that learning time is reduced.
- v. E-Learning provides scalability which helps in providing training.
- vi. All students can receive the same type of syllabus, study materials, and train through E-Learning.
- vii. Through E-Learning, students can save time, and money and reduced transportation costs. E-Learning is cost-effective compared to traditional learning.
- viii. E-Learning is provided online so no need for papers like traditional learning.

Concept of Civic Education

Civic education, initially known as 'civics' originated from 'civic' and 'civitas' meaning 'a citizen' and 'city-state'. It is an altruistic and moralistic term which initiates discussions of citizenship (socio-political) issues within the public (polis)

domains of the state. From the classical Greek period it was a tool to inculcate socio-political culture by infusing loyalty to collective interests and participation in state matters as hallmarks of effective citizenship (Meron, 2006)). Traditionally, civic education is used to provide insights into political traditions, principles, institutions and engaging in the political system of the state. Also, it has been used to construct and impart knowledge and skills regarding rights and obligations in order to participate in the public life of the society. It is an organised body of knowledge involving individuals and group membership's rights and duties, linked with citizenship of a state (Shah, et al, 2002; Gold cited in Meron, 2006). Overall, civic education depicts the link which young learners should have with the current political system of the state.

Civic Education as a School Subject in Nigeria

As portrayed in the civic curriculum objectives, Nigerian government indented using the subject as a tool to develop knowledge and skills regarding voting, governmental roles, citizens' rights, duties, values, ecological activism, community services and social networking for future citizenship engagement. Yet, the lack of extracurricular programmes could hinder the required experiential learning while in school (Miles, 2006). Currently, the Objective of Civic Education in Nigeria include according to Miles (2006), are:

- i. Acquiring and learning to use the skill, dispositions, knowledge and values which prepare learners to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives;
- ii. Attaining the Millennium Development Goals and the need to implement the critical element of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies;
- iii. Creating awareness on the provisions of the Nigerian constitution and the need for democracy;
- iv. Creating adequate and functional political literates among Nigerians;
- v. Sensitizing Nigerians on the functions and obligations of government;
- vi. Inculcating in the child the spirit of self-discipline, hard work, cooperation and respect for authority;
- vii. Promoting the understanding of the inter-relationship between man/woman, the government and the society;
- viii. Highlighting the structure of government, its functions and the responsibilities of government to the people and vice-versa;
- ix. Enhancing the teaching and learning of emerging issues;
- x. Inculcating in students their duties and obligations to society (NERDC, 2013).

Personal Competencies in Civic Education

According to Redding (2014), personal competencies—cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and social/emotional—play a crucial role in students' learning processes, impacting their mastery of knowledge and skills. These competencies are both developed through learning and actively applied during the learning process. Personalized learning, an approach increasingly made feasible by technological advancements, highlights the significance of these personal competencies. The optimism surrounding personalized learning is based on the idea that tailoring

education to individual students' needs—by offering them greater choice in topics, more control over their learning environment and strategies, enhanced access to resources, and frequent feedback on their progress—can boost their motivation and effectiveness. This shift towards a more student-centered approach underscores the importance of personal competencies in achieving successful learning outcomes (Redding, 2014).

Civic Education Curriculum (CEC) Implementation in Nigeria

Nigerian studies agreed that civic education curriculum (CEC) programme implementation, as in other developing democracies, is a major issue. Most curricula implementation has been mere declamatory without actual impact on the school, young learners and society. This is due to the lacuna between policy intents/objectives and actual classroom implementations due to bureaucratic barriers affecting our overall development (Obanya, 2007).

Implementing civic curriculum documents within the school context involve classroom interactive activities. The civic teacher (as facilitator) translates formally approved contents (a syllabus) into schemes of work and lessons notes to guide learners to construct knowledge and develop skills and dispositions (Onyeachu, 2008). The implementation process involves turning CEC objectives and content into practice through a process starting from the civic teacher designing the civic scheme of work, instructional materials, pedagogical methods and conducive classroom interactive setting and ending with learners acquiring and constructing (via the intended curriculum) concepts, skills, and dispositions aimed at effective participation in society. This makes civic learners the basic stakeholders in the civic curriculum implementation process. However, effective implementation of CEC should shift from the intended to learned curriculum when civic learners reflect traits of effective citizenship (Obanya, 2007).

Finally, the general policy implementation issues *pari-pasu* (side by side) with the classroom implementation process discussed above justified exploring the translation of civic curriculum as a school subject into classroom/school actualisation.

Need of Civic Education for Peace and National Unity in Nigeria

The aims of teaching civic education in schools are to develop and transform Nigerian youths into effective and responsible citizens. This includes fostering law-abiding individuals who are knowledgeable about governance and democratic processes (Centre for Civic Education, 1991). Civic education is also intended to cultivate essential qualities in young people, such as loyalty, honesty, discipline, courage, and patriotism, which are crucial for effective citizenship in a democratic society (NCSS, 1994).

These goals reflect the core components of civic education: civic knowledge, civic skills, and civic dispositions (Centre for Civic Education, 1994). Civic knowledge pertains to understanding civil life, politics, and the roles of citizens in a democracy. Civic skills involve intellectual and participatory abilities such as critical thinking, identifying, describing, analyzing, and evaluating, which are necessary for responsible citizenship. Civic dispositions are traits developed over time through learning and

experiences at home, school, and within the community, promoting democratic values like moral responsibility, self-discipline, respect for human dignity, civility, and adherence to the rule of law (Centre for Civic Education, 1994).

Nigeria also requires civic education to address societal issues. Recent events have highlighted a decline in national cohesion, cultural identity, and hospitality, marked by corruption, indiscipline, and disrespect for authority. These issues necessitate urgent value reorientation due to their negative impact on national development.

Moreover, civic education is fundamental in teaching students the right attitudes. It aims to discourage negative behaviors such as laziness, truancy, drug abuse, and bribery while promoting positive traits like hard work, integrity, and loyalty. It also addresses issues like indecent dressing, cheating, stealing, and bullying.

Importantly, civic education exposes students and the public to ways of achieving community and national development, including right values, religious tolerance, and the rights and duties of citizens. This enhances individuals' capacity to contribute to community, national, and global development (Olayemi, Abayomi, & Olatunde, 2011).

Recommended E-Learning Strategies for Implementing CEC for National Unity as follows:

To successfully translate civic education curriculum objectives into classroom implementation for the attainment of required peace and National Unity in Nigeria, Centre for Civic Education (1994) opined that relevant stakeholders should ensure compliance to the following policy statements:

- i. The government should promote e-learning training for Teachers and Administrators towards civic education and democratic interactions as the leading agenda of Teacher education programs.
- ii. Policy-makers in the education sector should make sure that the problem of paucity of materials for e-learning teaching and learning of Civic Education is done away with. This will facilitate easy comprehension and speedy inculcation of Civic Knowledge in Nigerian citizens.
- iii. The government should enhance the quality of education by expanding access to e-learning facilities, education, enrolment, and reduction in education wastage.
- iv. The role of civic Education must be activated by the government, awareness e-learning strategies to be adopted and proper e-learning strategies for coordinating and collaborating all the initiators of civic education to be enhanced
- v. In-house courses, seminars and workshops on e-learning should be organized from time to time by the Ministries of Education (Federal and States) for all teachers of Civic Education in order to give them quality e-learning training for the development of Civic Education curriculum Implementation.

E-Learning Strategies for Teaching and Learning Civic Education

A number of scholars have examined e-learning teaching strategies and how such methodologies affect learners' outcomes. Firstly, McCoy (2017) provides a link between e-learning strategies used in teaching and learners' environment, arguing that while strategies may be available to explore, it is the learners' facilities that ultimately make the lesson interesting and effective. Secondly, Tomal and Jones (2015) investigated various e-learning teaching strategies within Civic Education and its curriculum implementation and established varying trends relating to their uses, advancing a call for more learners--centered methodology through the use of e-learning to support quality outcomes.

Concept of Curriculum Implementation in Civic Education

The term "implementation," according to Okon and Akpan (2020), refers to the act of putting into effect a plan that has already been mapped out. It involves executing a plan, scheme, decision, proposal, intention, agreement, policy, or idea. Implementation is crucial, as it is the foundation of any plan and determines its success or failure. Without it, a plan remains merely a good intention. Mezieobi (2013) defines curriculum implementation as the daily activities undertaken by school management and classroom teachers to pursue the objectives of a given curriculum. Gbamanja (2009) asserts that implementation is the stage where a planned curriculum is actualized. Decisions about what should be studied and how it should be studied are put into practice during this stage, which primarily involves the school and its teachers. Civic Education curriculum implementation, therefore, is the process of bringing a dormant or inert curriculum plan to life, operationalizing it to achieve specified educational objectives.

Curriculum implementation involves putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses, and subjects. Mezieobi (2013) emphasizes that curriculum implementation encompasses the daily activities of school management and teachers aimed at fulfilling curriculum objectives. The effectiveness of this implementation is crucial for achieving educational goals. It is not merely about translating curriculum proposals into practice but involves a complex array of activities, materials, personnel, and other factors, including schools, teachers, curriculum materials, students, teacher training institutions, administrative and political factors, examination bodies, and community members (Mezieobi, 2013). This comprehensive view acknowledges all stakeholders involved in curriculum implementation.

According to Ayuba (2021), curriculum implementation is the task of translating curriculum documents into operational practice through the combined efforts of students, teachers, and other stakeholders. Gbamanja (2009) views it as the process of applying the curriculum to achieve its intended goals. Implementation involves disseminating information about new or revised curricula, assessing their feasibility and relevance, and linking curriculum theory to practice (Ayuba, 2021). It requires presenting curriculum content, methodology, and instructional materials to students in a classroom setting, with teachers using appropriate methods and materials to guide learning (Ahmed, 2015).

Effective implementation of the Civic Education curriculum depends heavily on quality teachers who are well-informed about what to teach and the attitudes, values, and skills expected to be imparted to students (Okan & Akpan, 2020). Jemialu (2018) suggests that effective implementation of the Civic Education curriculum is closely related to teaching effectiveness, including content knowledge, lesson presentation skills, and creating a conducive learning environment. It aims to achieve the learning objectives and reduce cognitive differences among students.

Importance of Curriculum Implementation in Civic Education

According to Okon and Akpan (2020), the task of curriculum delivery is basically carried out at the classroom level through teaching, learning support, advice and guidance, coaching, mentorship, peer and collaborative learning thereby leading to the achievement of curriculum objectives, feedback and assessment, personal development, planning and tutoring skills, encouragement towards practice skill and development as well as enabling access to curriculum resources (Guga & Bawa, 2012). In addition to what they have said, to ensuring curriculum delivery other community members apart from a teacher do assist within and outside the school. For instance, school supervisors, administrators, parents and examination bodies also contribute in the curriculum implementation process.

The Role of Teachers of Civic Education in Curriculum Implementation

The National Policy on Education (2013) asserts that the quality of effective teaching depends on the capabilities of trained civic education teachers and their ability to stimulate learning effectively. Akeke and Aluko (2017) highlight that the methods employed by civic education teachers significantly impact learners' levels of achievement. Although many individuals can assume the role of a teacher, the key question is how many are truly effective civic education teachers who possess both "what" and "how" knowledge.

Being an effective civic education teacher extends beyond possessing deep content knowledge. It also involves having organizational, management, and communication skills, as well as the ability to structure instruction and provide relevant assessments and fair evaluations. Furthermore, an effective civic education teacher must continually engage in learning due to evolving student characteristics, changes in the curriculum, and shifts in community and financial contexts.

Civic education teachers are central to the successful implementation of the subject. Without their effective teaching, the subject may not achieve its objectives. Instructional e-learning methods employed by teachers can greatly enhance the teaching and learning process. Effective civic education teachers are expected to use various instructional approaches, illustrations, and explanations to ensure maximum student engagement in the learning environment.

Effective teaching is characterized by the teacher's ability to be intellectually challenging, motivate students, set high standards, be approachable, present material engagingly, make civic education interesting, encourage self-directed learning, and possess strong communication skills that foster learning and produce positive outcomes (Akeke & Aluko, 2017).

Conclusion

Civic Education aims to promote unity and harmony within Nigeria, envisaging the nation as an "indivisible, indissoluble, democratic, and sovereign state founded on principles of justice, freedom, and equality." When effectively taught, civic education can transform individuals into responsible and engaged citizens, fostering peace and national unity. Implementing the proposed Civic Education Curriculum (CEC) and strategies could significantly enhance the development of citizens capable of contributing to these goals.

The integration of e-learning into civic education offers a valuable approach for teachers to effectively impart knowledge to students. E-learning methods in teaching civic education have proven to be an effective way to deliver content and engage learners, thus supporting the achievement of the educational objectives associated with civic education.

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