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Assessment of the Quality of Civics Textbooks in Secondary Schools in Osun State, Nigeria

Dr. B. A. Adeyemi

Associate Professor, Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

Abstract:

The study examined teachers' assessment of the arrangement and contents of the Civic textbooks with the approved guidelines for the secondary school curriculum in Osun State. It also determined teachers' assessment of the readability level of each of the textbooks with respect to students' ability to read and understand the contents of Civic textbooks effectively. The study further determined teachers' assessment of the relevance of the Civic textbooks at the respective level of the students and finally investigated difference in teachers' assessment of the qualities of two Civics Education textbooks recommended for use in Osun State secondary schools. The study adopted survey research design. Secondary school Civic Education teachers constituted the population for the study including the recommended Civic Education textbooks. 60 Civic Education teachers and 2 recommended Civic Education textbooks were sampled using multistage sampling technique and simple random sampling technique respectively. A questionnaire, termed Civic Teachers' Questionnaire on Quality of Recommended Civic Textbooks (CTQ²RCT), was used for the study. The instrument was developed by the investigator and validated before use. Three research questions were asked and answered, and one hypothesis generated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed among others that 8(26.7%), 10(33.3%), 3(10.0) and 4(13.3%), 10(37.3%), 2(6.7%) of the teachers admitted that the contents of textbooks 1 and 2 are in agreement with the guidelines spelt out in the approved curriculum of Civic Education. 7(23.3%), 11(36.7%), 6(20.0%) and 7(23.3%), 5(16.7%), 11(36.7%) were of the opinion that textbooks 1 and 2 are readable for the designated level. There was no significant difference in teachers' assessment of the quality of the recommended Civic Education textbooks with $t = -.102$; $p > .05$. The study concluded that the contents of Civic textbooks agree with the approved guidelines, readable and understandable according to the levels of the students.

Keywords: Assessment, quality, civic textbooks, secondary schools

1. Introduction

The importance of textbook cannot be overemphasized because it plays a vital role in education; that is why it is recommended and used in schools. A way of improving the readability of students in schools is by providing them with relevant and appropriate textbooks. Marsh (1992) defines textbook as a tool used by teachers to motivate students and to give them maximum understanding about a topic or problem.

Civic Education is the foundation in which political education is built, that is, without Civic Education there is no political education. For a nation to be well developed in citizenship, there is the need for Civic Education. Civics is the branch of government that deals with the study of national value. It is one of the core art subjects that is offered in secondary schools.

The ultimate goal of Civic Education is to prepare generations for the essential principles and values of democracy embodied with a high sense of responsibility and active engagement in issues in the society, community, state or what humans face in their everyday life. Civic Education, whenever and however undertaken, prepares people of a country, especially the young, to carry out their roles as citizens. Civic Education, therefore, is "the cultivation of the virtues, knowledge, and skills necessary for political participation" (Galston, 2001). Hence, both students and communities benefit from students' involvement in community-based learning activities. The most effective Civic Education design includes the direct teaching of the scholarly content knowledge and the balance of participatory skills with the modeling and teaching of Civic values and dispositions.

One of the most important things that we know about Civic Education is that American profess it to be essential—if not the essential—purpose of education. Although the notion that Civic Education needs to be strengthened and positioned as an organizing force in the public education system is not a novel one, there are variations in the nomenclature used by different scholars. Kidwell (2005), a researcher and Civic educator, addresses the relationship between Civic Education and state policy, and examines the use of the terms "Civic/government education" and "citizenship education," which are often used interchangeably.

Instructional materials play enormous role in the achievement of the set goals of Civic Education. Among various instructional aids is textbook. Textbook is frequently the most important teaching tool because it can determine not only what will be taught but also how it will be taught. Although television, computer, internet and other new media are

rivaling printed materials of communication, textbook remain major sources in school and colleges (Sohail, n.d). The role of textbooks in facilitating learning cannot be overemphasized. A textbook is only as good as the teacher who uses it. To this end, a textbook as an instrument of instruction helps in facilitating teaching learning process. It should be written on the basis of a prescribed syllabus in which the major ideals of the subject matter are selected and summarized judiciously. These ideas should be organized logically according to the mental makeup and psychological requirements of the students so as to facilitate teaching. Sometimes, a text book is called "The teacher in print".

1.1. Statement of the Problem

There are so many types of textbooks in the market today, which have caused so many damages to the teaching and learning of Civic in secondary schools. It has made Civic an abstract and complex Art subject and which has affected the students' performance. Akinwale (1997) had shown that readability refers to the factors that affect success in reading and understanding a text. The inability of authors to be explicit in what they put in their textbooks in terms of context, legibility, sentence structure, photographs and illustrations, attractiveness, examples organization, application and deviation of textbooks from the approved Civic curriculum calls for investigation.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this work is to study the assessment of the quality of Civic textbooks recommended for use in Osun State secondary schools.

Specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

- Examine teachers' assessment of the arrangement and contents of the Civic textbooks with the approved guidelines for the secondary school curriculum;
- Determine teachers' assessment of the readability level of each of the textbooks with respect to students' ability to read and understand the contents of Civic textbooks effectively;
- Determine teachers' assessment of the relevance of the Civic textbooks at the respective level of the students; and
- Examine the difference in teachers' assessment of the qualities of the two Civics textbooks recommended for use in Osun State secondary schools.

1.3. Research Questions

- Does the arrangement of the topics and contents of the two selected recommended Civic textbooks agree with the approved guidelines for Junior Secondary School and Senior Secondary School Curriculum in Nigeria?
- Are the two selected recommended Civic textbooks readable and understandable for Junior and Senior Secondary School students in Osun State?
- Are the selected textbooks relevant to the level of the students?

1.4. Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in teachers' assessment of the quality of the two Civics textbooks recommended for use in Osun State Secondary Schools.

1.5. Method

The study adopted survey research design. The population for this study comprised secondary school Civic Education teachers including the recommended Civic textbooks used in secondary schools in Osun State. The sample consisted 60 Civic Education teachers selected using multistage sampling technique and two Civic textbooks selected using simple random sampling technique. Five Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected using simple random sampling technique. Six secondary schools were equally selected from each LGA using simple random sampling technique. Two Civic Education teachers were then selected from each school through simple random sampling technique. One instrument was developed and used for data collection. This is: Civic Teachers' Questionnaire on Quality of Recommended Civic Textbooks (CTQ²RCT). CTQ²RCT is a self-constructed instrument designed to measure the readability of approved Civic textbooks that are recommended for use in terms of content fact, organizational structure of the topics, format and styles of writing, examples, illustrations and language of presentations, complexity of words and sentences, contents in line with the Civic curriculum. It consisted of 10 items scored on a four-point scale, i.e. (1) unsatisfactory (2) Fair (3) Good (4) Superior. The 10 items were generated from existing literature on the quality of Civic textbooks recommended for use in the junior secondary and senior secondary schools and the quality of six textbooks selected for the study. The validity of the instrument was established by experts in curriculum education. The data collected were analysed using frequency, percentage and t- test statistical procedures.

2. Results

2.1. Research Question 1

Does the arrangement of the topics and contents of the two selected recommended Civic textbooks agree with the approved guidelines for Junior Secondary School and Senior Secondary School Curriculum in Nigeria?

To answer this research questions, items 1, 2, 6, and 7 on the teacher's questionnaire were subjected to a descriptive analysis of frequency and percentage. The result is presented in Table 1.

Sl. No.	Items	Text	Unsatisfactory		Fair		Good		Superior	
			f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
1	The up-to-date level of the contents of the textbooks	1	-	-	13	43.3	13	43.3	4	13.3
		2	3	10.0	13	43.3	9	30.0	5	16.7
2	Agreement of the contents with the guideline in the approved curriculum	1	9	30.0	8	26.7	10	33.3	3	10.0
		2	14	46.7	4	13.3	10	33.3	2	6.7
6	Adequacy of conclusions, summaries and questions at the end of each chapter	1	7	23.3	6	20.0	13	43.3	4	13.3
		2	9	30.0	8	26.7	5	16.7	8	26.7
7	Coverage of the subject matters	1	6	20.0	7	23.3	13	43.3	4	13.3
		2	7	23.3	10	33.3	6	20.0	7	23.3

Table 1: Teachers' Assessment of the Arrangement and Contents of the Civic Textbooks

Table 1 revealed that 13.3% and 16.7% of the teachers indicated that the up-to-date level of the contents of the textbook 1 and 2 respectively is superior; whereas, 43.3% and 30.0% of the teachers rated textbook 1 and 2 as good. It is further observed that 33.3% each of the teachers rated textbook 1 and 2 as fair. While none of the teachers rated textbook 1 as unsatisfactory in terms of up-to-date level of the contents. However, 10.0% of the teachers rated textbook 2 as unsatisfactory. In terms of agreement of the contents of the textbooks with the guideline in the approved curriculum, textbook 1 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 10.0%, 33.3%, 26.7%, and 30.0% of the teachers respectively whereas, textbook 2 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 6.7%, 33.3%, 13.3%, and 46.7% of the teacher respectively. Adequacy of conclusions, summaries and questions at the end of each chapter of textbook 1 was rated superior (13.3%), good (43.3%), fair (20.0%) and unsatisfactory by 23.3% of the teachers while textbook 2 was rated superior (26.7%), good (16.7%), fair (26.7%) and unsatisfactory 30.0% of the teachers. Finally, on coverage of the subject matters of each of the textbook, 13.3% of the teachers rated textbook1 as superior, 43.3% as good, 23.3% as fair and 20.0% as unsatisfactory while textbook 2 received superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory rating from 23.3%, 20.0%, 33.3%, and 23.3% of the teachers respectively.

2.2. Research Question 2

Are the two selected recommended Civic textbooks readable and understandable for Junior and Senior Secondary School students in Osun State? In order to answer this research questions, items 4 and 5 on the teachers' questionnaire were subjected to a descriptive analysis of frequency and percentage. The result is presented in Table2

Items	Text	Unsatisfactory		Fair		Good		Superior		
		f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	
4	Vocabulary and presentation of the text are very easy for students to understand	1	8	26.7	7	23.3	9	30.0	6	20.0
		2	6	20.0	8	26.7	9	30.0	7	23.3
5	Clarity, readability and attractiveness of text in the textbooks	1	6	20.0	7	23.3	11	36.7	6	20.0
		2	7	23.3	7	23.3	5	16.7	11	36.7

Table 2: Teachers' Assessment of the Readability Level of Each of the Textbooks

Table 2 showed that the vocabulary and presentation of the text are very easy for students to understand as textbook 1 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 20.0%, 30.0%, 23.3% and 26.7% of the teachers respectively whereas, textbook 2 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 23.3%, 30.0%, 26.7% and 20.0% of the teachers. On clarity, readability and attractiveness of text in each of the textbooks, textbook1 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 20.0%, 36.7%, 23.3% and 20.0% of the teachers while textbook 2 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 36.7%, 16.7%, 23.3% and 20.0% of the teachers.

2.3. Research Question 3

Are the selected textbooks relevant to the level of the students?

In order to answer this research questions, items 3, 8, 9 and 10 on the teachers' questionnaire were subjected to a descriptive analysis of frequency and percentage. The result is presented in Table 3.

Items	Text	Unsatisfactory		Fair		Good		Superior		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	
3	Organisation of the materials gives room for effective teaching and learning of Civic values	1	8	26.7	6	20.0	10	33.3	6	20.0
		2	7	23.3	9	30.0	10	33.3	4	13.3
8	Textbook is good and useful for both rural and urban students	1	8	26.7	6	20.0	12	40.0	4	13.3
		2	7	23.3	8	26.7	8	26.7	7	23.3
9	The textbook is readily available in the bookshops	1	6	20.0	1	50.0	5	16.7	4	13.3
		2	13	43.3	4	13.3	5	16.7	8	26.7
10	The textbook is a good teaching aid	1	2	6.7	1	36.7	11	36.7	6	20.0
		2	4	13.3	1	3.3	14	46.7	11	36.7

Table 3: Teachers' Assessment of the Relevance of the Civic Textbooks at the Respective Levels of the Students for Each of the Textbooks

Table 3 showed teachers' assessment of the relevance of the Civic textbooks at the respective levels of the students for each of the textbooks. As shown above, in terms of organisation of the materials for effective teaching and learning of Civic values, textbook 1 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 20.0%, 33.3%, 20.0% and 26.7% of the teachers respectively whereas, textbook 2 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 13.3%, 33.3%, 30.0% and 23.3% of the teachers. As regards the sensitivity of the textbooks to students in both rural and urban areas, textbook 1 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 13.3%, 40.0%, 20.0% and 26.7% of the teachers respectively whereas, textbook 2 was rated superior, good, fair and unsatisfactory by 23.3%, 26.7%, 26.7% and 23.3% of the teachers. Availability of each of the textbook in the bookshop showed that textbook 1 received superior by 13.3% of the teachers, good by 16.7%, fair by 50.0% and unsatisfactory by 20.0% while textbook 2 received superior by 26.7% of the teachers, good by 16.7%, fair by 13.3% and unsatisfactory by 43.3% of the teachers respectively. The assessment of each of the textbooks in relation to their use as teaching aids shows that textbook 1 was rated superior by 20.0% of the teachers, good by 36.7%, fair by 36.7% and unsatisfactory by 6.7% while textbook 2 was rated superior by 36.7% of the teachers, good by 46.7%, fair by 3.3% and unsatisfactory by 13.3% of the teachers.

2.3.1. Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in teachers' assessment of the quality of the two Civics-textbooks recommended for use in Osun State Secondary Schools. In order to test this hypothesis, scores of teachers' assessment on the two textbooks were subjected to independent t-test. The result is presented in Table 6.

Textbooks	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	df	P
Textbook1	30	24.7000	3.37486	.61616	-.102	58	.919
Textbook2	30	24.8000	4.17216	.76173			

Table 4: T-Test of Significant Difference in Teachers' Assessment of the Quality of the Two Civics Textbooks Recommended for Use in Osun State Secondary Schools
 $p > .05$

Table 6 showed the difference in teachers' assessment of the quality of the two Civics textbooks recommended for use in Osun State Secondary Schools. It can be observed from the table that there was no significant difference in teachers' assessment of the quality of textbook 1 ($M = 24.70$, $SD = 3.37$) and textbook 2, $M = 24.80$, $SD = 4.17$; $t(58) = -.102$, $p > .05$. Though, textbook 2 had higher mean than textbook 1, however, difference in their mean was not statistically significant at .05 level of confidence. The result concludes that there was no significant difference in teachers' assessment of the quality of the two Civics textbooks recommended for use in Osun State Secondary Schools. In other words, the quality of the two Civics textbooks recommended for use in Osun State Secondary Schools of the same.

3. Discussion

The findings of this study showed that the majority of the teachers indicated that the recommended textbook contents adequately covered the Civic Education curriculum contents. This is in line with the submission of Branson (1998) that Civic knowledge is concerned with the content or what citizens ought to know, the subject matter and that the contents of the Civic Education curriculum were carefully planned to take adequate care of students need about civility in the society.

It was also revealed that the readability level of each of the textbooks with respect to students' ability to read and understand the contents of Civic textbook is satisfactory. This is a plus to the efforts at improving students' learning outcomes in the subject. In line with this result is the submission of Fatoba (2015) who stated that readability of Biology textbooks had significant influence on students' academic performance. Since the recommended Civic textbooks are readable and understandable for secondary school students in Osun State, it would serve as a major avenue of communication to the students while reading. The textbook was rated high on their attractiveness which is one of the key factors that draw the attention of the reader as the students. This corroborates the assertion of Ojedokun (2000) who

stated that any book targeted at any particular level of education especially primary and secondary schools must possess an attractive quality.

The results further showed that the Civic textbooks are relevant at the respective level of the students. The relevance of the textbooks was measured through the parameters of organization of the materials for effective teaching and learning of Civic values, sensitivity of the textbooks to both rural and urban areas, availability of the textbook in the bookshop and teaching aids for the achievement of the set objectives. This finding upholds Fredricks and Eccles (2002) who submitted that factors to consider in the selection of textbooks relevant to the level of the students includes the content in the Civic textbook, effective organization of the material in terms of teaching and learning of Civics, clear and readable print, conclusion, summaries and questions at the end of the chapter. The extent of textbooks' usefulness, however, is determined by how readable and understandable they are to learners (Allington, 2002). Textbooks that are beyond learners' reading competence, including their comprehension and vocabulary, only result in frustration and will not lead to learning because active processing is unlikely to take place. Textbooks, therefore, have to be pitched against the right level of reading competence (Sibanda, 2014).

It was also revealed that there was no significant difference in teachers' assessment of the quality and readability of the two Civics textbooks recommended for use in the secondary schools in Osun State. This implies that the two textbooks are at par when considering their readability which is an indication for better meditation of learning.

4. Conclusion

The study revealed that Civics textbooks have great impact on the academic performance of students since it is one of the necessary teaching materials used in schools. The Civics textbooks considered could be said to agree with the approved guidelines, readable and understandable according to the levels of the students. Civics textbooks help in the teaching and learning of Civics. Therefore, teachers need to give adequate explanations to the difficult topic. When textbook is readable and understandable, students will be actively involved in the class and this will arouse their interest in the subject and improve their academic performance as well.

5. Recommendation

Teachers mediate the information contained in textbooks to their learners and are therefore also important stakeholders in this regard. Hence, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Textbooks with author(s) who are professionals in Civics Education should be recommended at all levels of education.
- All teachers be trained to evaluate the suitability and readability of textbooks as part of their teacher education or in-service training. There are many textbooks in the market competing for attention, and training teachers should use sound criteria to evaluate textbooks and choose the most appropriate and accessible ones for their learners which would be of great value.
- Where teachers realize that the textbooks already in use in their school are beyond their learners' reading level, they need to devise strategies for mediating the content and adapting the material to the appropriate level.

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