
EFFECT OF VALUE ANALYSIS STRATEGY ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHARACTER EDUCATION IN SOCIAL STUDIES IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Recent experiences have shown that secondary school students in Osun State exhibit deficiency in character attitude as evident in such antisocial acts as bullying, examination malpractices, rape, dishonesty, fraud and cybercrimes. Previous studies largely focused on factors predisposing students to character deficits with little consideration for intervention with the use of innovative value-laden strategies for enhancing attitude to character education aspect of Social Studies. This study, therefore, examined the effect of value analysis on students' attitude to character education in Social Studies in Osun State, Nigeria. The pretest-posttest control group, quasi-experimental design using the 2x2x3 factorial matrix was adopted for the study. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted. Four schools were purposively selected in Osun State, Nigeria. The schools were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The participants were 239 Junior Secondary School II students (129 males, 110 females). Attitude towards character education ($\alpha=0.79$) was the main instrument used for data collection, while Instructional guide was procedural instruments. Data were analysed using Analysis of

Covariance at 0.05 level of significance. There was no significant main effect of treatment on students' attitude towards character education ($F_{(2,320)}=7.48$; $\eta^2=0.05$). There was no significant main effect of academic ability on students' attitude towards character education ($F_{(2,320)}=5.50$; $\eta^2=0.03$). Gender had no significant main effect on attitude to character education. Values analysis strategy was effective in enhancing students' attitude to character education. Hence, it was recommended among others that values analysis and conventional strategies should be adopted in teaching character concepts in Social Studies to enhance attitudinal changes.

Keywords: Academic ability, Gender, Value analysis strategy, Character education, Social Studies

Introduction

Indeed, one of the ways to assess youths' behaviour is the ability to act wisely. Hence, the society wants its members to act positively in situations they find themselves. However, 'moral cancer', crime and violence, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, lack of purpose and vision, social vices, among a host of others, are unabatedly spreading like a viral invasion in the wider Nigerian society (Fakze, 2011; Momodu, 2015). Onyeama (2013) further corroborated this by stating that the decline of values is largely responsible for the current social malaise plaguing the Nigerian society. Meanwhile, the position of various scholars has been that there is the problem of declining moral conduct in many parts of the world, Nigeria inclusive, and this has found its way into schools (Amaele, 2007; Ojo, 2008).

This is why every society has established socialisation processes and educational institutions to mould the behaviour of its members accordingly. Thus, teachers of all subjects in all schools seek to help their learners develop the potential for desirable behaviours. Lee (2006) asserted that the basic justification for teaching Social Studies is the contribution it can offer to an individual's potential for acting wisely in human affairs in all parts of the world. To this end, the

teaching of moral characters in schools has become imperative in order to reverse the trend and revive the glory of the past values of society. This worrisome trend possibly explains why themes on character education are often embedded in Social Studies and civic education curricula for the Junior Secondary Schools (JSS).

Character teaching in the olden days took the form of stories and mentorship. Plato learned from Socrates through their engaging conversations, and travelling and living with Socrates as well as embracing the qualities he observed in his teachers. As the socialization of the child is now shifted from the home and religious institutions to the school where the majority of the children spend the greater part of their days, stories are still powerful vehicles for character education, and the process is intensified in schools through Social Studies curriculum. Indeed, there is still disagreement as to how the various values concepts of the Social Studies curriculum should be taught and the methodological approaches desirable to teach moral character (Huitt, 2004a; Ojo, 2008). To this end, Amaele (2007) identified pedagogical problems as the contributing factors to why the Nigerian youths in particular and growing adults in general display behaviours that create a lot of social problems in our contemporary time. Hence, a return of the desired moral values through appropriate character education in Social Studies would ensure correction of the social decadence in the society.

Social Studies as a dynamic discipline encompasses character formation and uses various lenses to provide solutions to human problems from multifaceted perspectives. Social Studies provides coordinated and systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities and mathematics to solve human problems (Ogunyemi, 2011). Its major aim is to help young people and adult at large develop ability for informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world (National Council for the Social Studies - NCSS, 1994; Ajiboye, 2010). As a field of study, Social Studies has been given different names and labels

in different countries. Among these are social education, social literacy, civics or civic education, citizenship education and education for democratic citizenship (Ogunyemi, 2002). To be effective, therefore, Social Studies must be attuned to the realities of present-day life in Nigeria, and this calls for activities that make lessons development-oriented and close to life experiences.

Nigeria today is a country obviously facing different problems similar to those that confronted it before and immediately after the civil war of 1967 to 1970. Thus, in an attempt to contemplate ways of addressing these problems, one cannot be unmindful of the pedagogical, sociological, cultural and technological forces that are at work in the contemporary world and in the country itself. Because of the nature of character development and character training, it is evident that character is not always taught but caught by emulating and observing. Therefore, there is the need for more effective teaching strategies that will improve attitude to character education aspect of Social Studies. To this end, there is the need to prepare young people for their social inheritance and, therefore, advocated three dimensions of education, namely, development of knowledge, training of mental abilities and development of character.

Character implies the constellation of strengths and weaknesses that form and reveal who we are. Assessing our character means taking an inventory of peoples' dominant thoughts and actions. Character also includes thinking, feeling, and behaviour; and character strengths should be accepted as a family of positive traits reflected in those thoughts, feelings, and behaviours (Lickona, 2008). Generally, character, good or bad, is considered to be observable in one's conduct. Thus, character is different from values because values are orientations or dispositions, while character involves action or activation of knowledge and values (Huitt, 2004b). From this perspective, values are seen as one of the foundations for character. Equally, character is different from attitude because attitude is the opinion or method by which one approaches a given situation, while character makes one to do a particular thing even if the world is watching (Aron, 2011). However, one of the main differences between attitude and character is that character is the identity, whereas, attitude

The data in table 1 shows that based on students' clandestine behaviour, the students from small size families had a mean of 1.526, while those large families had a mean of 1.529. Hence, the students from large families have a higher mean than those from small families. As a result, the students from large families have worse clandestine behaviour than their counterparts in the small families. The data also showed a t-value of -0.078, $df = 398$ and a p-value of .938, testing at an alpha level of .05. The p-value is greater than .05, thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between family size and students' clandestine behaviour is retained, meaning that there is no difference in clandestine behaviour of students in small and large families.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between family type and students' clandestine behaviour.

Table 2: Simple linear regression statistics on relationship between family type and students' clandestine behaviour

Treatment	Gender	Academic Ability		
		High	Moderate	Low
Experimental Group 1	Male			
Value Analysis Strategy	Female			
Control Group	Male			
Conventional Strategy	Female			

The sample consisted of 239 participants drawn from four co-educational schools (to allow males and females) across the two local governments in Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the sample for the study. Purposive random sampling was used to select two co-educational schools from each of the two local governments in Ilesa city, Osun State. Hence, four schools were used for the study (two schools were taught with Value Analysis Strategy and two schools were taught with conventional lecture strategy). From each school that met the inclusion criteria, simple random sampling was used in selecting an intact JS II class. The selected character concepts that were covered are also embedded in the JSII civic education and Social Studies

curricula. Two validated stimulus instruments were used for the study. These are Instructional Guide for Value Analysis Strategy (inter-rater reliability index $\pi = 0.80$) and Instructional Guide for Conventional Strategy (inter-rater reliability index $\pi = 0.84$). One adapted (Adetoro, 2014) and validated instrument (Attitude to Character Education Scale $\{r = 0.79\}$) was also used for the study. Students' academic ability was determined through their standardised unified promotion examination percentage average scores for grouping into high, moderate and low academic ability levels. Data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant main effect of treatment (value analysis) on junior secondary school students' attitude to character education.

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) by Treatment, Gender and Academic Ability

Source	Type III Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Square
CORRECTED MODEL	49600.663 ^a	18	2755.592	33.867	.000	.656
INTERCEPT	22239.802	1	22239.802	273.333	.000	.461
PRE-ATTITUDE	24212.298	1	24212.298	297.576	.000	.482
MAIN EFFECTS	1217.468	2	608.734	7.482	.804	.000
TREATMENT	1.651	1	1.651	.020	.887	.000
GENDER	894.695	2	447.348	5.498	.004*	.033
ACADEMIC ABILITY	101.255	2	50.627	.622	.537	.004
2-WAY INTERACTIONS	595.874	4	148.969	1.831	.123	.003
TREATMENT*GENDER	76.233	2	38.117	.468	.626	.004
ER	113.265	4	28.316	.348	.845	
TREATMENT*ACADEMIC ABILITY	26036.848	220	81.365			
GENDER*	5697088.000	239				
ACADEMIC ABILITY	75637.510	238				
3-WAY INTERACTIONS						
TREATMENT*GENDER*ACADEMIC ABILITY						
ERROR						
TOTAL						
CORRECTED TOTAL						

a. R squared = .656 (Adjusted R Squared = .636)
*Significant at $P < .05$

Table 2 shows that there is no significant main effect of treatment on junior secondary school students' attitude to character education in Social Studies ($F_{(2,320)} = 7.48$; $p > .05$). Thus, the hypothesis was not rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant main effect of academic ability on junior secondary school students' attitude to character education.

Table 2 indicates that there is no significant main effect of academic ability on junior secondary school students' attitude to character education in Social Studies ($F_{(2,320)} = 5.50$; $p > .05$). Thus, the hypothesis was not rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant main effect of gender on junior secondary school students' attitude to character education.

Table 2 shows that there is no significant main effect of gender on junior secondary school students' attitude to character education in Social Studies ($F_{(1,320)} = 0.20$; $p > .05$). Therefore, hypothesis 3 was not rejected.

Discussions

The findings of this study showed no significant main effect of treatment on students' attitude to character education in Social Studies. This it might probably be due to positive relationship between students' knowledge of character concepts and their attitude to character issues. This is in line with the findings of Ajiboye (1996) and Omosehin (2004) that individual attitudes to a particular subject and concepts of issues depend to a large extent on his knowledge. Similarly, it might probably be due to the socio-cultural context where learning takes place. This is because Nigerian school learners are used to the conventional strategy of imparting knowledge. This no superiority of value analysis strategy over conventional strategy agrees with the submissions of Frazee and Ayers (2003), Schug (2003)

and Adetoro (2014) that conventional strategy is the background of good teaching as it is required for cognitive coaching, authoritative learning and substantive knowledge.

The result showed that academic ability had no significant main effects on students' attitude to character education. This finding perhaps is due to the fact that the two strategies (value analysis and conventional method) facilitated effective teaching and learning of various emerging themes (character education, environmental education and population education, inclusive) in Social Studies to the extent that the effect of academic ability was more pronounced on the attitudinal domain of students' learning outcomes. The result confirms the submissions of Muscott, et al. (2008) and Yeung, et al. (2009) that a great deal of research related to character education posits that students who develop good character are likely to exhibit higher academic ability. The findings further corroborate the studies of Muscott, et al. (2008), Youth Frontier (2008) and Yeung, et al. (2009) that schools in which building students' character was a priority showed improved academic outcomes. However, the result of this study provides empirical contradictions to the findings of Gillead (2003) and Allen (2005) that academic ability as a single factor did not significantly influence students' attitudes. This is likely to be as a result of the fact that attitude formation takes a longer period of time than some other variables.

The findings of this study revealed that there was no significant main effect of gender on students' character attitude in Social Studies. This might be due to the fact that in the classroom, both male and female students were fully under the control of the subject teacher, all students received information uniformly as the teacher directed the lesson based on the treatments. Although the male students had a slightly higher post-attitude mean score than their female counterparts, the mean difference was not significant. This implies that irrespective of whether students are males or females, the experimental treatment was more effective than the control. This non-significant effect of gender was in support of earlier studies (Omiyefa, 2009 and Kehinde-Awoyele 2012), which did not observe significant

gender difference in learners' attitudes to civic issues, moral character and value education. This finding also gave credence to the findings of Ogunbiyi (2006), Ige (2013) and Adetoro (2014) which reported no significant gender differences in students' learning outcomes. However, the findings of this study contradict those of Hambali (2015) which found a significant gender difference of students' acceptance on the implementation of character education as female students were found to have higher mean scores than their male counterparts in character attitudes. The socio-cultural context of the study might have accounted for this gender difference.

Conclusion

The study has established that the use of value analysis and conventional strategies are effective in improving students' attitude to character education in Social Studies. The strategies have enhanced students' character attitude by extending young peoples' attention beyond the classroom to the real-world situation and to engage them in the process of devising solutions to moral character crises they will confront as they grow older in the society. Also, it was discovered that academic ability had significant interfering effects on students' character attitude, but gender was not a strong interference of students' character attitude when exposed to these strategies. The study was considered both timely and imperative as students' civility and moral character continue to dwindle and the continuous use of teacher-centred strategies which portend retardation in the teaching learning process.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that teachers at all levels of education should adopt value analysis strategy for the teaching and learning of character education concepts in Social Studies, since they involved students' active participation in their learning process. Teachers should moderate the conventional mode of teaching with value analysis strategy so as to aid better comprehension and use of information for active engagement. Regular seminars and workshops should be given by experts in the use of value analysis strategy to the serving Social Studies and civic education teachers in both primary and secondary schools. In this regard, government and

Social Studies Association of Nigeria (SOSAN) should organise regular conferences and seminars using value analysis instructional strategy for character development. Teachers should be cognisant of the influence of students' academic ability and gender when using value analysis strategy by using mixed group, gender, team ground, heterogeneous groups and simple to complex learning, so as to cater for all academic categories of learners.

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