

Influence of Social Studies Education on Leadership Skills among Secondary School Students in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of social studies education on leadership skills among secondary school students in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State. One hypothesis was formulated to direct the study and literature reviewed was based on the variables of the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 300 students was selected using simple random and stratified sampling procedures. Questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection. The reliability estimate of the instrument was established through test-re-test reliability method. Independent t-test statistical technique was adopted to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that there is a significant influence of moral values on leadership skills among secondary school students in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State. Based on this finding, it was recommended, among others, that the government should include in secondary school curriculum value education as this will enable students to grow and become responsible citizens.

Keywords: social studies, leadership skill, moral values

Introduction

Leadership skills are the strengths and abilities individuals demonstrate that help them oversee processes, guide initiatives and steer their people towards achieving pre-stated goals and objectives. Leadership skills are an essential component in positioning executives to make thoughtful decisions about their organization's mission and goals, and properly allocate resources to achieve those directives.

Valuable leadership skills include the ability to delegate, inspire and communicate effectively. Other leadership skills include honesty, confidence, commitment and creativity (Ogundiya, 2010). According to Tannenbaum and Massarik (2016), leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goals. It is an interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation, and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals (Tannenbaum & Massarik, 2016).

Leadership skill is not a person or a position. It is a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good. It is that process in which one person sets the purpose or direction for one or more other persons and gets them to move along together with him or her and with each other in that direction with competence and full commitment. Leadership is the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants (Warren, 2017). Leadership is a social process in which one individual influences the behaviour of others without the use of threat or violence (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2013). Leadership is about articulating visions, embodying values, and creating the environment within which things can be accomplished (Richards & Engle, 2018).

The scope of leadership skill is wide as it includes all the day-to-day activities of the government, such as the exercise of authority on the economic, political and administrative levels in the nation (Odo, 2015). According to Udo (2015), institutional and structural arrangement, decision-making processes, policy formulation and implementation capacity, development of personnel, information flow and the nature and style of leadership within a political system form part of the leadership skills.

Good leadership by implication is when the government can carry out the activities mentioned above for the good of all the citizens. Good leadership is integral to economic growth, the eradication of poverty and hunger, quality education and sustainable development. The issue of good leadership is a problem that has crippled the growth of many countries in the world particularly, Nigeria. Good leadership is, among other things, about being participatory, transparent and accountable. It is described as the government of the society which is rightly exercising authority in solving people problems and conflict resolution; it also involves the capacity to manage resources efficiently for development, and high level of responsiveness to the needs and the interest of the citizens (Otoghile, 2014). To promote leadership quality among the students, Education that is not only in theory but the one that can transfer theory to practice is necessary; the type of education that requires students

to have a relatively permanent change in behaviour. This is the reason why the teaching of morals, values, and social norms has been integrated into social studies curriculum (Odo, 2015).

The relevance of social studies education on quality leadership among secondary school students cannot be overemphasized. Formal education plays a pertinent role by exposing the students to the information, issues, analyses and interpretations on environment and development (Akpan, 2013). Social Studies is a value-oriented subject concerned with the training of citizens to imbibe appropriate national values and develop appropriate attitudes for leadership and nation building (Njoku, 2010). According to Edinyang (2008), it is a problem-solving subject because it inculcates in learners personal awareness, sense of responsibility, logical thinking, appropriate decision-making and judgment on issues relating to man's way of life and his environment. The Social Studies curriculum builds four capacities in young people: disciplinary knowledge, thinking skills, commitment to democratic values and citizenship participation (Akpan, 2013). It is therefore the subject with the greatest mandate to achieving the national goals.

In view of this, Esu and Inyang-Abia (2004) submitted that one major aim of Social Studies is to impart knowledge that provides valuable information necessary for life and living, with the basic function of facilitating among the learners the inculcation of desirable social habits, healthy attitudes, sound moral values and leadership quality. This also involves functional skills in self expression, communication and problem-solving which are necessary survival tools for the individual within a rapidly changing society. Social Studies inculcates in learners lofty societal values such as obedience, hard work, honesty, dignity of labour, patriotism, diligence, respect for human individuality and respect towards constituted authority (Rofem, 2016).

In secondary school, there is recurrence of students' deviant behaviours such as cultism, examination malpractices, sexual permissiveness, alcoholic and drug addiction, lying and dishonesty, disrespect for constituted authority, abortion, truancy, indecent dressing, bullying, rape, lateness, vulgarities and even suicide. The problem of deviant behaviours as exhibited by the students has metamorphosed into a cankerworm with devastating consequences both on the students themselves and the Nigerian society at large, since students are leaders of tomorrow (Akpan, 2016). This is the reason why the inculcation of social norms and moral behaviour has become one of the major goals of the school curriculum in Nigeria and many other nations of the world. In spite of the efforts made by both the government and the school authorities to checkmate deviant behaviours, it is observed with dismay that the chronicle of deviant activities in secondary schools is unending. Indeed, the

magnitude both in scale and in frequency has reached an alarming dimension that affects quality leadership (Gert, 2016).

Every society, primitive or modern established means of inculcating in the young ones the acceptable values of the society, This is the reason why teaching of moral values in the school system has become an important area of focus in recent times in Nigeria and some other parts of the world (Akpan, 2016). The central idea of education is mainly the transmission of knowledge and societal values and building human moral development that will last throughout lifetime.

To reduce the non-adherence to morality in the society to manageable level, a vital constitution of an effective moral learning experience needs to be developed for schools (Ajere, 2006). The school curricular is expected to articulate learning experiences that can promote moral values which include leadership quality among the student (Iyamu & Otete, 2013). This is the reason why the teaching of morals, values, and social norms has been integrated into different school subjects like Christian religious knowledge, social studies, civic education and health education. Social Studies, as a subject of study in our school, is of great importance in the transformation of the child's moral behaviour; whatever a child will be in future, he needs moral education for a meaningful existence in the world.

Moral values are principles or standards of good behaviour. According to the Wikipedia free Encyclopedia (2008), morality is derived from the Latin word "Moralitas" meaning manner, character and proper behaviour. Falack (2010) defines morality as an ideal code of conduct, one which would be espoused in reference to alternatives by all rational people, under specified conditions. It is the pattern of behaviour that the society wants from the people. Moral values are associated with both a descriptive and a normative sense. In the descriptive sense, moral value refers to a code of proper conduct corroborated by individuals or groups (Gert, 2016). Ibok (2015) stated that moral behaviour is a beneficial act which each organization, society, or community prizes its value. Moral behaviour is essential and necessary, and it is a desired characteristic which differ individuals to be distinctive.

Tony (2015) examines the role of Social Studies in development of good citizenship of secondary school students in Ogun State. A sample 330 students were used for the study. The design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey approach. Two research question and two hypotheses were duly tested using Chi-Square. The results obtained amongst others, revealed that there is a significant influence of moral behaviours on the development of good citizenship of secondary school students.

Abraham (2016) examines the influence of Social Studies education on leadership skills among secondary school students in Ogun State. Four public secondary schools in Ogun State were selected for the study. A sample of 200 JSS 2 students was used for the study. The design adopted for the study was a survey approach. Three research question and two hypotheses were duly tested using t-test statistics. The results obtained amongst others, revealed that there is a significant influence of moral behaviour on leadership skills among secondary school students. Pornrunroj (2014) opined that moral values that make a person to be virtuous and noble are self-discipline, conscience, gratitude, kindness, patience, honesty, austerity, perseverance, and selflessness; it refines one's character and behaviour to be well thought of and admired. A person with moral values is able to endure hardship, overcome criticism, stealing, drug abuse and optimistically confront challenges in a tranquil manner (Guseinov, 2014).

Theoretical framework

Cognitive development theory of learning by Jean Piaget (1926)

Jean Piaget propounded cognitive development theory of learning in 1926. According to him, habit or behaviour is dependent upon cognitive schemes and recommended several strategies. Some of these strategies include analysis of learning unit, problem solving, use of guessing, transformation of knowledge, inductive and deductive search for meaningful practices. According to Jean Piaget theory, learners perceive learning experiences in relation to their individual goals. Thus, learning involves learners' organization of precepts and purpose. Learners' moral learning experiences significantly influence deviant behaviour (Enang, 2006). From the above theory, it can be deduced that Social Studies as a subject of study in our school is of great importance in the transformation of the student's moral behaviour. The students need moral education for a meaningful existence in the world. The teachers can structure and restructure the learning situation to produce different emotional, leadership quality and moral behaviour. The students learn and exhibit desirable behaviour. The effective study of Social Studies in schools is valuable for moral development of the individual, leadership quality, nation and the wellbeing of her citizens.

Research Question

To what extent do moral values influence leadership skill among secondary school students?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant influence of moral values on leadership skills among secondary school students.

Methodology

The study area was Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State. The research design adopted is survey design. This design was preferred because it is concerned with finding, describing and interpreting data collected from samples of population. The population for the study consisted of all the secondary school students in JSS 2 in Calabar metropolis of Cross River State. A sample of 300 JSS 2 Students was randomly selected for the study.

An instrument titled Moral Values and Leadership Skills Questionnaire (MVLSQ) was used for data collection. It consisted of two sections, A and B. Section A described the bio data of the respondent while section B developed on moral value which is the main variable of the study. The questionnaire was based on four point scale used in measuring respondents' level of agreement or disagreement. The instrument was face-validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation from the University of Calabar. Corrections were pointed out by the experts and adjusted by the researchers and the document was considered valid. In order to establish the reliability of the instruments, Test- retest reliability estimate method was adopted. This was done through administration of the questionnaire to 40 respondents who were not part of the actual sample used for the study. The results obtained from the statistical analysis of data collected showed the reliability estimate of 0.80. This estimate was found reliable on the basis that the value is significantly high. The number of students that agreed positively to research variable were classified under moral value while those that disagreed were classified under immoral values. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer programme was used to analyze the data collected. The data generated were analyzed using independent t-test.

Presentation of results

The result of the analysis is presented in the table 1. The hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis: There is no significant influence of moral values on leadership skill among secondary school students.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is cultivation of moral value, while the dependent variable is leadership skills. Independent t-test analysis was used to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Independent t-test analysis on influence of moral value on leadership skill among the students(N=300)

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	t-value
Moral value	193	15.69	6.99	7.41*
Immoral value	107	10.21	5.61	

* Significant at .05, critical t = 1.96, df=298

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 1 revealed that, the calculated t-value of 7.41 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 levels of significance with 298 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that moral values do not significantly influence leadership skill among secondary school students was rejected. This result implies that, moral values significantly influence leadership skills among secondary school students.

Discussion

The study found that there is a significant influence of moral values on leadership skills among secondary school students. This agrees with the study of Tony (2015) which revealed a significant influence of moral behaviours in development of good citizenship of secondary school students. Esu and Inyang-Abia (2004) submitted that one major aim of Social Studies is to impact knowledge that provides valuable information necessary for life and living with the basic function of facilitating among the learners the inculcation of desirable social habits, healthy attitudes, leadership quality and sound moral value.

This finding is in consonance with the finding of Pornrunroj (2014) whose study indicated that moral values enriches a person to be virtuous and noble with such attributes as self-discipline, conscience, gratitude, kindness, patience, honesty, austerity, perseverance, and selflessness; it refines one's character and behaviour to be well thought of and admired. A person with moral behaviour is able to endure hardship, exhibit good leadership quality, overcome criticism, stealing, drug abuse and optimistically confront challenges in a tranquil manner (Guseinor, 2014). This finding equally agreed with Udo (2015) who found out in his study that social studies promotes leadership quality among the citizens. Leadership quality is not a person or a position. It is a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that there is a significant influence of cultivating moral behaviour from the knowledge of Social Studies on

leadership skill among secondary school students. On the basis of this finding, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government should provide secondary school with guidance counsellors that will counsel newly admitted students and other students from time to time on the importance of moral values to the school, home and society. This will help to promote quality leadership among the youth.
2. Parents and teachers should encourage and instill the value of hard work, quality leadership in children so that they will perform well in their academics and grow to become important personalities in the society.
3. The government should include value education in secondary school curriculum; this will help breed responsible citizen and future leaders of tomorrow.

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