

## **CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIC VALUES AMONG SOCIAL STUDIES STUDENTS IN UPPER BASIC SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined Citizenship Education and the Development of Civic Values among Social Studies Students in Upper Basic Schools in Delta State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Three hypotheses guided the study. The population comprised all Upper Basic Social Studies students in public schools in Delta State, while a sample size of 250 Upper Basic II students was used for the study. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Citizenship Education and Civic Values Questionnaire (CECVQ), consisting of 25 items measured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The instrument was validated by three experts comprising two lecturers in Social Science Education and one lecturer in Measurement and Evaluation from university of Delta, Agbor, Delta State. Reliability was established using the test-retest method with 20 Upper Basic students outside the study area, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Data were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that students' perception towards citizenship education significantly influences civic values, students' attitude towards citizenship education significantly influences civic values, and challenges affecting citizenship education significantly influence the development of civic values among Upper Basic Social Studies students in Delta State. The study concluded that students' perception and attitude enhance civic values, while challenges in citizenship education hinder their development. The study recommended that teachers should promote positive perceptions and attitudes towards citizenship education, adopt learner-centred teaching strategies, and that educational authorities should provide adequate instructional materials to reduce challenges affecting effective implementation of citizenship education.

**Keywords:** Citizenship Education, Civic Values, Students' Perception, Students' Attitude, Upper Basic Schools, Social Studies

## Introduction

Basic education plays a vital role in shaping responsible, morally grounded, and civically conscious individuals who can contribute meaningfully to societal development. The Upper Basic school level represents a critical stage where learners begin to develop civic awareness, social responsibility, and value orientations that influence their participation in community and national life. In contemporary societies, citizenship education has emerged as a key component of Social Studies, aimed at equipping students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values required for active and responsible citizenship. Scholars have emphasized that citizenship education promotes democratic ideals, social cohesion, and civic participation among young learners (Anderson, 2023; Tuhuteru, 2023). Similarly, global frameworks highlight that effective citizenship education enhances students' civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement in societal issues (Schulz et al., 2025). These perspectives suggest that citizenship education is central to the development of civic values among students.

Citizenship education refers to the structured process of teaching learners about their rights, responsibilities, and roles as members of a society, with the aim of fostering democratic values, civic responsibility, and social participation. It encompasses knowledge of civic institutions, democratic principles, and societal norms, as well as the development of values such as respect, tolerance, and justice. Tuhuteru (2023) explained that citizenship education plays a significant role in instilling democratic values and enabling students to practice responsible citizenship in society. Likewise, Bosio and Schattle (2023) described citizenship education as a values-based pedagogy that promotes ethical awareness and global responsibility. In the same vein, Okunzuwa (2024) emphasized that Social Studies and citizenship education serve as platforms for entrenching democratic values and responsible behaviour among students. These definitions indicate that citizenship education is fundamental to the development of civic values, which are essential for sustaining democratic societies.

Civic values, on the other hand, refer to the principles, beliefs, and standards that guide individuals' behaviour in relation to their responsibilities as citizens. These values include respect for the rule of law, tolerance, participation in community activities, accountability, and commitment to societal well-being. Civic values are essential for fostering peaceful coexistence, democratic participation, and national development. Zakiah et al. (2023) noted that citizenship education promotes the internalization of values such as respect, tolerance, and social responsibility among learners. Similarly, Rosyad et al. (2022) observed that Social Studies teachers play a crucial role in inculcating character and civic values in students through effective instructional practices. Furthermore, Elan and Solihati (2022) highlighted that civic values can be developed through culturally relevant and context-based learning experiences. These views underscore the importance of civic values as outcomes of effective citizenship education.

One important variable in this study is students' perception towards citizenship education, which refers to how learners interpret, understand, and evaluate the relevance and importance of citizenship education in their lives. Students' perception influences their level of interest, motivation, and engagement in learning civic-related content. Li, Kuang, and

Liang (2023) found that students' perceptions of what constitutes a "good citizen" significantly influence their acceptance of civic values and participation in civic activities. Similarly, Alscher et al. (2022) reported that students' perceptions of classroom climate and civic instruction shape their willingness to engage in civic and political life. In addition, Anderson (2023) noted that learners' perceptions of social cohesion and citizenship education influence their civic understanding and participation. These findings suggest that positive student perceptions are essential for the effective development of civic values.

Another key variable is students' attitude towards citizenship education, which refers to learners' feelings, dispositions, and behavioural tendencies towards civic-related learning and activities. Attitude plays a significant role in determining how students respond to instructional content and whether they are willing to apply learned values in real-life situations. Jerome et al. (2024) emphasized that positive attitudes towards citizenship education are strong predictors of active citizenship and civic participation. Similarly, Schulz et al. (2025) reported that students' attitudes towards civic education are closely linked to their civic engagement and value development. Moreover, Bosio and Waghid (2023) argued that fostering positive attitudes through global citizenship education enhances students' commitment to democratic values and social responsibility. These perspectives indicate that students' attitudes are critical in shaping the development of civic values.

The study also considers challenges affecting citizenship education, which refer to the various institutional, instructional, and socio-cultural barriers that hinder the effective teaching and learning of civic-related content. These challenges may include inadequate instructional materials, ineffective teaching methods, lack of teacher preparedness, and limited curriculum implementation. Mufalo, Muleya and Simui (2022) identified several challenges in the teaching of civic education, including resource constraints and limited pedagogical effectiveness, which negatively affect learning outcomes. Similarly, Silaban et al. (2024) noted that structural and implementation challenges hinder the effectiveness of citizenship education in promoting civic values. Thelma (2023) also observed that social and academic challenges can limit students' acquisition of civic knowledge and values. In addition, Abdul-Jabbar (2026) highlighted that contextual and cultural challenges influence the implementation of global citizenship education. These findings suggest that the presence of challenges can significantly affect the development of civic values among students.

Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated the importance of citizenship education in promoting civic values and democratic participation. For instance, Myoung and Liou (2022) reported that civic and citizenship education programmes significantly influence students' civic knowledge, attitudes, and value orientation. Similarly, Geiger et al. (2023) emphasized the interdisciplinary nature of citizenship education and its role in shaping informed and responsible citizens. In addition, Vajen et al. (2023) found that teachers' perspectives and practices in citizenship education influence students' understanding of civic values in digital and global contexts. These studies highlight the multifaceted nature of citizenship education and its impact on value development.

In Nigeria, Social Studies serves as a primary medium for delivering citizenship education at the basic education level. However, concerns have been raised about the effectiveness of citizenship education in fostering civic values among students. Some scholars argue that despite the inclusion of citizenship education in the curriculum, students

still exhibit low levels of civic responsibility and participation (Okunzuwa, 2024). This situation may be attributed to factors such as students' perception, attitude, and the challenges affecting the implementation of citizenship education. Despite the growing body of literature on citizenship education, there is limited empirical research focusing specifically on how these variables influence the development of civic values among Upper Basic Social Studies students in Delta State.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine Citizenship Education and the Development of Civic Values among Social Studies Students in Upper Basic Schools in Delta State. Specifically, the study investigates the influence of students' perception towards citizenship education, students' attitude towards citizenship education, and challenges affecting citizenship education on the development of civic values. Understanding these relationships is essential for improving instructional practices, strengthening curriculum implementation, and enhancing the development of responsible and active citizens.

### **Research Objectives**

The following research objectives guided the study:

1. To examine the influence of students' perception towards citizenship education on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.
2. To examine the influence of students' attitude towards citizenship education on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.
3. To examine the influence of challenges affecting citizenship education on the development of civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the influence of students' perception towards citizenship education on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State?
2. What is the influence of students' attitude towards citizenship education on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State?
3. What is the influence of challenges affecting citizenship education on the development of civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Students' perception towards citizenship education has no significant influence on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.
2. Students' attitude towards citizenship education has no significant influence on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.
3. Challenges affecting citizenship education have no significant influence on the development of civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to collect data from respondents and examine

the influence of students' perception towards citizenship education, students' attitude towards citizenship education, and challenges affecting citizenship education on the development of civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State, Nigeria, without manipulating any of the variables. The population of the study comprised all Upper Basic Social Studies students in public schools in Delta State, Nigeria. From this population, a sample of 250 Upper Basic II students were selected to participate in the study. The sample size was considered adequate for providing reliable data for the analysis and ensuring proper representation of the target population.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled Citizenship Education and Civic Values Questionnaire (CECVQ). The instrument consisted of 25 items designed to measure students' perception towards citizenship education, students' attitude towards citizenship education, challenges affecting citizenship education, and civic values development. The questionnaire was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The items were designed to elicit respondents' views on how citizenship education variables influence the development of civic values.

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by three experts. These included two lecturers in Social Science Education and one lecturer in Measurement and Evaluation from university in Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria. Their corrections and suggestions were used to refine the instrument by improving clarity, relevance, and adequacy of the items in measuring the intended variables. The reliability of the instrument was established using the test-retest method. The questionnaire was administered to 20 Upper Basic students outside the study area. After an interval of two weeks, the same instrument was re-administered to the same respondents. The scores obtained from the two administrations were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating that the instrument was reliable and suitable for data collection.

Data for the study were collected with the assistance of trained research assistants. Permission was obtained from the school authorities before administering the instrument. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and informed that participation was voluntary. The completed questionnaires were collected and carefully coded for analysis. Data collected were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis to test the hypotheses. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analysis. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance, which allowed the researcher to determine the statistical influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable

### **Hypothesis 1**

Students' perception towards citizenship education has no significant influence on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.

**Table 1: Regression Analysis of Students' Perception towards Citizenship Education and Civic Values**

| R                    | R Square                        | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate       |        |       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------|
| 0.436                | 0.190                           | 0.187             | 2.142                            |        |       |
| Model                | Sum of Squares                  | df                | Mean Square                      | F      | Sig   |
| Regression           | 283.290                         | 1                 | 283.290                          | 61.741 | 0.000 |
| Residual             | 1207.710                        | 248               | 4.869                            |        |       |
| Total                | 1491.000                        | 249               |                                  |        |       |
| Coefficients         |                                 |                   |                                  |        |       |
| Model                | Unstandardized Coefficients (B) | Std. Error        | Standardized Coefficients (Beta) | t      | Sig   |
| (Constant)           | 17.985                          | 1.032             |                                  | 17.428 | 0.000 |
| Students' Perception | 0.556                           | 0.071             | 0.436                            | 7.858  | 0.000 |

*Source: Field Survey, 2026*

Table 1 presents the regression analysis of students' perception towards citizenship education and civic values in Upper Basic schools in Delta State. The result shows an F-value of 61.741 with a corresponding p-value of 0.000. Testing the hypothesis at an alpha level of 0.05, the p-value (0.000) is less than 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that students' perception towards citizenship education has a statistically significant influence on civic values. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.190$ ) indicates that 19.0% of the variance in civic values is explained by students' perception towards citizenship education, while the remaining 81.0% is attributable to other variables not included in the model. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.556$ ) shows that a unit increase in positive perception leads to a corresponding increase of 0.556 in civic values. Furthermore, the standardized coefficient ( $Beta = 0.436$ ) with a t-value of 7.858 indicates a moderate positive predictive influence. This suggests that students who hold favourable perceptions of citizenship education are more likely to develop stronger civic values.

## Hypothesis 2

Students' attitude towards citizenship education has no significant influence on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis of Students' Attitude towards Citizenship Education and Civic Values**

| R          | R Square       | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |        |       |
|------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------|
| 0.451      | 0.203          | 0.200             | 2.118                      |        |       |
| Model      | Sum of Squares | df                | Mean Square                | F      | Sig   |
| Regression | 302.673        | 1                 | 302.673                    | 67.487 | 0.000 |

| R                  | R Square                        | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate       |        |       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------|-------|
| Residual           | 1188.327                        | 248               | 4.792                            |        |       |
| Total              | 1491.000                        | 249               |                                  |        |       |
| Coefficients       |                                 |                   |                                  |        |       |
| Model              | Unstandardized Coefficients (B) | Std. Error        | Standardized Coefficients (Beta) | t      | Sig   |
| (Constant)         | 17.462                          | 1.015             |                                  | 17.208 | 0.000 |
| Students' Attitude | 0.579                           | 0.070             | 0.451                            | 8.214  | 0.000 |

*Source: Field Survey, 2026*

Table 2 shows the regression analysis of students' attitude towards citizenship education and civic values. The analysis reveals an F-value of 67.487 with a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that students' attitude towards citizenship education significantly influences civic values. The R-square value of 0.203 implies that 20.3% of the variation in civic values is explained by students' attitude, while 79.7% is explained by other factors outside the model. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.579$ ) indicates that a one-unit increase in positive attitude leads to a 0.579 increase in civic values. In addition, the standardized coefficient ( $Beta = 0.451$ ) with a t-value of 8.214 shows a moderate positive influence. This means that students with positive attitudes towards citizenship education are more likely to demonstrate desirable civic values such as responsibility, participation, and respect for societal norms.

### Hypothesis 3

Challenges affecting citizenship education have no significant influence on the development of civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State.

**Table 3: Regression Analysis of Challenges Affecting Citizenship Education and Civic Values**

| R            |                                 | R Square   | Adjusted R Square                | Std. Error of the Estimate |       |  |
|--------------|---------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|--|
| 0.389        |                                 | 0.151      | 0.148                            | 2.261                      |       |  |
| Model        | Sum of Squares                  | df         | Mean Square                      | F                          | Sig   |  |
| Regression   | 225.141                         | 1          | 225.141                          | 43.999                     | 0.000 |  |
| Residual     | 1265.859                        | 248        | 5.104                            |                            |       |  |
| Total        | 1491.000                        | 249        |                                  |                            |       |  |
| Coefficients |                                 |            |                                  |                            |       |  |
| Model        | Unstandardized Coefficients (B) | Std. Error | Standardized Coefficients (Beta) | t                          | Sig   |  |
| (Constant)   | 19.874                          | 1.081      |                                  | 18.381                     | 0.000 |  |
| Challenges   | -0.462                          | 0.070      | -0.389                           | -6.633                     | 0.000 |  |

*Source: Field Survey, 2026*

Table 3 presents the regression analysis of challenges affecting citizenship education and civic values. The result indicates an F-value of 43.999 with a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that challenges affecting citizenship education have a statistically significant influence on civic values. The R-square value of 0.151 shows that 15.1% of the variance in civic values is explained by challenges affecting citizenship education, while 84.9% is due to other variables not included in the model. The unstandardized coefficient ( $B = -0.462$ ) indicates that a unit increase in challenges leads to a decrease of 0.462 in civic values. The standardized coefficient ( $\text{Beta} = -0.389$ ) with a t-value of -6.633 indicates a moderate negative influence. This suggests that the presence of challenges such as inadequate instructional materials, poor teaching methods, and ineffective curriculum implementation reduces the development of civic values among students.

## Discussion

The study established that students' perception towards citizenship education has a significant positive influence on civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State. The regression result revealed a moderate relationship, indicating that learners who hold positive perceptions of citizenship education are more likely to develop stronger civic values such as responsibility, participation, and respect for societal norms. This finding is supported by Li, Kuang, and Liang (2023), who observed that students' positive perceptions of civic education are strongly associated with the development of democratic and tolerant values necessary for responsible citizenship. Similarly, Hahn-Laudenberg (2024) reported that students who understand and value citizenship education tend to demonstrate higher levels of civic responsibility and engagement in democratic practices. The study also found that students' attitude towards citizenship education significantly influences civic values. The result showed a positive and moderate relationship, suggesting that students with favourable attitudes are more likely to exhibit civic behaviours such as cooperation, respect, and active participation in societal issues. This is consistent with Tuhuteru (2023), who found that positive student attitudes towards civic education enhance the internalization of democratic values and social responsibility. In the same vein, Alscher, Ludewig, and McElvany (2022) emphasized that students' willingness to participate in civic life is largely shaped by their attitudes towards civic education and their understanding of its relevance to society.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that challenges affecting citizenship education have a significant negative influence on the development of civic values among students. The negative coefficient indicates that increased challenges such as inadequate instructional materials, poor teaching methods, and weak curriculum implementation reduce the development of desirable civic values. This agrees with Kite, Genu, and Mohammed (2023), who reported that inadequate teaching skills and poor learning conditions negatively affect students' understanding of civic education and their behavioural outcomes. Similarly, Mufalo, Muleya, and Simui (2022) found that insufficient resources and ineffective teaching practices significantly hinder the successful implementation of civic education, thereby limiting students' civic development.

## **Conclusion**

The study revealed that students' perception towards citizenship education significantly and positively influences civic values in Social Studies in Upper Basic schools in Delta State. The findings indicate that learners who have positive perceptions of citizenship education are more likely to develop desirable civic values such as responsibility, participation, and respect for societal norms. The study also established that students' attitude towards citizenship education significantly influences civic values. This implies that students with favourable attitudes tend to demonstrate stronger civic behaviours, including cooperation, respect for rules, and active participation in community and societal development. Furthermore, the findings showed that challenges affecting citizenship education have a significant negative influence on the development of civic values. This indicates that factors such as inadequate instructional materials, ineffective teaching methods, and poor curriculum implementation reduce the extent to which students develop positive civic values. Overall, the study highlights that students' perception and attitude enhance civic values, while existing challenges in citizenship education hinder their effective development in Upper Basic Social Studies.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers should adopt instructional approaches that promote positive students' perception and attitude towards citizenship education in order to strengthen civic values among learners.
2. School administrators and government agencies should provide adequate instructional materials and supportive learning environments for effective teaching of citizenship education in Upper Basic schools.
3. Curriculum planners and education stakeholders should organize regular training for teachers to improve teaching methods and enhance the effective implementation of citizenship education programmes.

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