# Superiority of Study Group and Peer Tutoring as Strategies for Improving Students' Academic Performance in Civic Education.

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**Abstract**

*This study determined the effects of two forms of collaborative strategies (Study Group and Peer Tutoring) on students' academic achievement in Civic Education in Junior Secondary Schools in Lagos State. Three hypotheses were tested"at 0.05 level of significance". The study employed the quasi-experimental design of pre-test post-test control group. The instrument was Civic Education Achievement Test ( 0.78), administered to 109 students from three public secondary schools. The Experimental groups 1 and 2 were taught using Study group and Peer Tutoring respectively, while the control group was taught with conventional strategy. The data collected were subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that there was a significant main effect of the treatments on students who were taught Civic Education. Study group performed best, followed by Peer tutoring group while Conventional group came last. There was no significant main effect of gender. There was also no significant interaction effect of gender and treatment on post-test achievement scores. It is recommended, among others, that Civic Education teachers should adopt Study group and Peer tutoring teaching strategies in their classroom practices improved achievement in Civic Education.*

**Keywords:** Civic Education, Collaborative Learning, Gender, Peer tutoring, Study group.

## Introduction

Civic Education came back to Nigerian primary and secondary schools in year 2007 under the new Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, when Social Studies education was split into Civic Education and Social Studies. The objective of Civic Education is the development of 'good citizens' which calls for activities that will make lessons in the two subjects development–oriented and close to life experiences (Ogunyemi, 2003). The goals of the Civic Education curriculum are derived from the general philosophy of education in the country, particularly objectives one and two, which are (1) the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity and (2) the inculcation of the type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society (NPE 2008). Until then, elements of Civic Education had been taught as part of Social Studies and Citizenship Education. The new curriculum not only disarticulates these contents from their present "homestead" but goes further to provide an operational definition of Civic Education that will enable the nation to determine and achieve its objectives in concrete and measurable terms. The curriculum addresses young Nigerians in the formative educational years (Universal Basic Education years of between 5 and 14). The contents address issues that are important to developing young Nigerians into responsible citizens. The themes cover topics like Human Values, Citizenship, National Identity, Human rights, Duties and Obligations of Citizens, Social Issues, Peace and Conflict, and National Economic Life. Knowledge gained in the course of learning the various themes are supposed to equip young Nigerians with the skills to deal with various social and personal issues, including economic life skill, and afford the learners an appreciation of their rights, duties and obligations as citizens. The subject should also make learners appreciate the rights of other citizens. From the National curriculum on Civic Education of 2007, the goals are:

i. to develop in the child an awareness of, and a desirable attitude to, the Nigerian Constitution;
ii. to inculcate in the child the spirit of self-discipline, hard work, cooperation and respect for authority;
iii. to develop in the child a sense of national pride and loyalty to the nation; and
iv. to foster in the child a sympathetic understanding of the peculiarities in his(her) environment, thus enabling him (her) develop attitude which would promote environmental conservation for his well-being and the common good (NERDC, 2007).

The need for Civic Education in the recent time in Nigeria arose from some complaints about Social Studies, particularly about its effectiveness. However, it should be noted that Civic Education is a branch of Social Studies. Social Studies focus on humans in their social and physical environment. It also studies the effect of science and technology on the social and physical environment. Hence, Social Studies is said to be the study of people in relation to each other and to their world. It is an interdisciplinary subject that draws upon History, Geography, Economics, Law, Political Science and other disciplines (Western Canadian Social Studies,2002). Social Studies is not simply social science simplified for pedagogical purposes but it is a study of problem of survival in an environment and how to find solutions to human problems (Ogundare, 2000).

Civic Education, which is an aspect of Social Studies, varies historically from country to country. It is more relevant in Nigeria today because the country is faced with a continued decline in civic values and a downward trend in morals. Many of her citizens have redefined citizenship as a matter of survival, especially in the face of scarce resources. The growing intolerance of one another by citizens and the continued mistrust of government by the governed heightened the need for Civic Education. Civic Education that promotes the development of competence and motivation to engage actively in community issues, is seriously desired in the country. As espoused by Yusuf and Adika (2017), Civic Education that is concerned with the study of rights and duties of the citizen in a country and aims at building an informed, responsible and morally-law abiding citizen as well as inculcating in the people a sense of commitment to the fundamental values and principles, is very essential now. Civic Education, therefore, allows us to avoid value disintegration in the society (Kayode-Olawoyin, 2017).

A comprehensive Civic Education consists of three components: cultivation of a civic disposition, civility, a

sense of personal efficacy, and a belief in advancing the public good (Barbara, 2009). It is concerned with the science of comparative government and means of administering public trust—the theory of governance as applied to state institutions. It is usually considered a branch of applied ethics and is certainly part of politics (Babatunde, 2008). Civic Education, whenever and however undertaken, prepares the people of a country, especially the young, for carrying out their functions as citizens. Civic Education is therefore, political education or is described as 'the cultivation of the virtues, knowledge and skills necessary for political participation'. Civic Education covers much more than mere cognitive knowledge of the systems, organs and functions of government. Udoh (2000) further says that the understanding of the constitution involves participation in the democratic process and appreciation of citizen's fundamental rights and social justice. Therefore, understanding Civic Education, especially democratic education, can and should involve both formal settings (schools) and informal settings (families, communities, libraries, house of worship, workplaces, civic organizations, unions, sport teams, mass media and so on). The informal settings and methods are most often associated with political socialization.

Relevant and beneficial as Social Studies/ Civic Education are, the extent to which most Nigerians manifest the purpose of Social Studies and general civic responsibilities have been seriously questioned (Akintunde, 2008). Academic performance in Junior Secondary School Three (JSS III) Social Studies is also still not satisfactory (Okam, 2008). As it is in many other subjects, how to objectively teach and learn Social Studies to benefit the learners makes educators to continually search for more effective methods and materials. It is a fact that many Social Studies' teachers use the traditional lecture method (Okam, 2008). It is in connection with poor manifestations of some of the objectives of Social Studies that the Obasanjo administration enforced the teaching of Civic Education separately with the Basic Education programme (NERDC, 2007) although the military had mooted the idea since 1991. In order to make Civic Education effective and make children gain more than mere cognitive knowledge as well as develop positive social interaction, there is need to try other methods like collaborative learning.

Many other subjects, such as Business Education and Science (Okebukola, 1991; Lazarowitz, 2003; Kiadese, 2005) have used this method and found it profitable in the classrooms. Whether or not students will learn Civic Education better if they are exposed to collaborative learning method is yet to be adequately explored, particularly in the Nigerian environment. Theoretically, students learn best when they are actively involved in the process. Regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats. Students who work in collaborative groups also appear more satisfied with their classes. In the collaborative learning approach, students work in teams (Groups) on problems and projects under conditions that ensure both positive interdependence and individual accountability (Smith, 2004). Effective and efficient learning is facilitated when differences among learners are recognized and attempts are made to teach students differently. Learning is facilitated and topics are taught in depth rather than covered in breath. Meaningful materials and meaningful tasks are also learned more readily (Akinlaye, 1996).

With collaborative learning, teaching and learning are said to be influenced considerably by individual needs, aspirations, level of interest, taste, values and motivation in the environment. Learning is said to be actively promoted by frequent repetition of response to class situation and limitation of events. Collaborative learning and social relation are also speculated to develop general mutual concern and interpersonal trust among students and increase students' propensity for pro-social behavior (Slavin, 2003). Various names have been given to this form of teaching, but there are some distinctions among them. Such names are collaborative learning, group learning, collective learning communities, peer teaching, peer learning, reciprocal learning, team learning, study circle, study group, and workgroup (Johnson; Johnson and smith;2004). Broadly speaking,however; there are three general types of group work: informal learning group; formal learning group and study team (Okobi; 2013). Regardless of the name and the minor differences, the mutual concern among students is measured in many of the collaborative learning situations as social relations by obtaining from students ratings of peers and perceptions of being liked by peers tutoring (Smith; 2004). Cooper (2000) found that students who were initially prejudiced against one another evidenced greater interpersonal interaction in an experimental group setting than the students in competitive and individualistic settings. Ifamuyiwa (2001) studied the effects of cooperative, competitive and individualistic use of self-instructional packages on learners' academic achievement in mathematics at the secondary level. The findings showed that students who used the packages co-operatively significantly achieved better in Mathematics than those that used the packages competitively and individually.

Ndirika and Ubani (2017) investigated the effect of Peer Tutoring teaching strategy on academic achievement of Biology students. Four research questions were posed and four hypotheses were set for analysis. Quasi experimental design was utilized. Purposive sampling was used to draw 40 students from two private schools in Umuahia education zone. Results showed that there was no statistically significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students exposed to Peer Tutoring and Conventional Teaching methods. Also, there was no difference in the mean gain in achievement of students taught with the two strategies. Male and female students taught with the two strategies showed no significant difference. The authors recommended that Biology teachers were to utilize peer tutoring alongside conventional teaching method in teaching Biology. If this could be effective in Biology class, it may also be effective in Civic Education class.The two collaborative techniques chosen for this study are peer tutoring and study group. This is because they generally hold potentials for achieving the objectives of Civic Education as earlier stated.

**Yashvinder andSujatha (2018) opined that**Peer tutoring is a teaching strategy that uses students as tutors. The student pairs might work on academic, social, behavioral, functional or even social skills. There are many different

ways to pair students, such as by ability level, skills mastered, or age. The authors also identified different types of Peer tutoring models as Class Wide Peer Tutoring, Cross-Age Peer Tutoring, Reciprocal Peer Tutoring, Same-age Peer Tutoringand PeerAssisted Learning Strategies. Cohen and Sampson (2001) stated that peer tutoring involves students' learning from and with each other in ways which are mutually beneficial and involve sharing knowledge, ideas and experience between participants. The emphasis is on the learning itself. It involves teams of three to six students collaboratively researching a topic that relates to a curriculum or teacher's 'work issue'. Types of peer teaching activities are students-led workshops, peer feedback, study groups and learning partnerships.

Study Groups, according to Murphy (2000), consists of no more than six individuals who can work effectively to plan common or connected instructional units, propose school-improvement measures, and research new instructional and learning techniques. An overview committee can plan ahead of time the content and topics of discussion. The committee is composed of teachers and supporting system, covering more material and making learning interesting. Open doors (2019) suggested that students need to join study groups in school because of the following reasons, numbered below.(1) Students gain better understanding of subject better while reading together. (2) Study group can help solidify and clarify course materials, leading to more promising classroom experiences, and potentially a better GPA. By understanding the subject and feeling motivated, students may feel more willing to do better in class, on tests, and on assignments. (3) Study groups allow each student to share ideas and thoughts about a particular subject. Depending on the group's dynamic, students may even give small presentations that can be highly beneficial to the learning process; students who are going to present before their study groups are less likely to forget to do their reading because they do not want to be embarrassed in front of their peers. (4) By forming and participating in a regular study group, prospective employees will have ample experience from which to draw answers, stories and more during an interview and in the workplace. (5) Naturally, some students are more organized and have better time management skills than others. Being a part of a study group will hone these skills for some and help others get a sense for how this can be done in other aspects of their lives.

From the foregoing, three main issues have prompted this study. Firstly, there is the search for teaching and learning strategies that could proactively save Civic Education from failure. Secondly, the study is interested in the extent to which collaborative methods, which have been tested in other subjects, could make the new Civic Education programme to be effectively taught and learnt. And thirdly, there is the fact that research is inconclusive as to whether or not a particular gender stands to benefit more than another in the application of any one or the two selected collaborative methods.

**Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant main effect of treatment on achievement in Civic Education.
2. There is no significant main effect of gender on the mean post-test achievement scores of students exposed to Civic Education under different treatment conditions.
3. There is no significant interaction effect of gender on the effect of treatment on the post-test scores of students exposed to Civic Education under different treatment conditions.

**Methods**

The study employed a quasi-experimental design of pre-test, post-test and control groups. Three 'intact' groups of students were assigned into two experimental conditions and one control group. For each group, pre-test and post-test achievement scores were obtained before and at the end of the experiment respectively. The participants were 109 JSS 2 students in Epe Division, Lagos State. Three schools were randomly sampled to participate in the study, one school from each of the three Local Government Areas to avoid contamination of the subjects. The schools were, however, selected based on the availability of teachers for the experimental treatment. Only public secondary schools were involved in the study because of the qualification and experience of the needed teachers as well as the comparability of standard of the schools. From each school, an arm of JS 2 class was selected by simple random sampling for the study.The instrument used for the study was Civic Education Achievement Test (r= 0.78) and instructional guides. The topics treated in this study were taught by the Social Studies teachers in the selected schools. The treatment lasted six weeks. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages; mean and standard deviation were computed. The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA,) with pre-test scores as covariate, was used to test the three research hypotheses for the study.

**Findings**

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean post-test achievement scores of students exposed to Civic Education under three different conditions.

Table 1: ANCOVA of post-test achievement scores of students exposed to Civic Education under three different treatment conditions.

**Test of Between –Subjects Effects**

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Corrected Model | 350.840[a] | 5 | 70.168 | 10.911 | .000 |
| Intercept | 547.645 | 1 | 547.645 | 85.158 | .000 |
| GROUP | 102.759 | | 251.380 | 7.989 | .001 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CIVIC | 91.912 | 1 | 91.912 | 14.292 | .000 |
| GROUP*CIVIC | 64.941 | | 232.431 | 5.049 | .008 |
| Error | 662.390 | | 103 | 6.431 | |
| Total | 18082.000 | | 109 | | |
| Corrected Total | 1013.229 | | 108 | | |

[a] R Square = .346 (Adjusted R Squared =.315)

F- ratio for group comparison is 7.989 which is significant at 0.001. This means that there is a significant difference among the three groups based on the treatment received.

**Table 2: Estimated Marginal Means for the Groups.**

**Group**

Dependent Variable: Civic po

| | | | | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Group** | **Mean** | | **std.Erro** | **Lower Bound** | **Upper Bound** |
| CG | 12.239[a] | .479 | | 11.289 | 13.189 |
| PT | 13.026[a] | .666 | | 11.704 | 14.347 |
| ST | 14.154[a] | .470 | | 13.221 | 15.086 |

[a]Evaluated at co-variates appeared in the model: Civic = 9.95

The estimated marginal means for Study Group is 14.154, with standard error of 0.470, while Peer Tutoring is 13.026 with standard error of 0.666 and Conventional Group is 12.239, with standard error of 0.479. This shows that the treatment produced different effects on Civic Education scores. This means that Study Group performed best, followed by Peer Tutoring group and Conventional Group.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect of gender on the mean post-test achievement scores of students exposed to Civic Education under different treatment conditions.

Table 3: Estimated Marginal Means for Male and Female Groups.

| | | | | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group | Sex | Mean | S E | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| PT | MALE | 11.398a | .633 | 10.142 | 12.655 |
| | FEMALE | 11.417a | .638 | 10.152 | 12.683 |
| ST | MALE | 14.480a | .621 | 13.248 | 15.713 |
| | FEMALE | 13.211a | .647 | 11.927 | 14.495 |
| CG | MALE | 12.529a | .640 | 11.259 | 13.799 |
| | FEMALE | 11.861a | .713 | 10.446 | 13.275 |

A Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: age = 13.66, prciv = 9.95

The estimated marginal means and the pair wise comparison, Table 3 shows that there is no Significant effect of gender on the treatments. This means that both male and female students were equally affected by the treatments. Both male and female performed similarly.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant interaction of gender on treatments on post-test mean scores of Civic Education Finding is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: ANOVA of interaction of Gender and Treatment

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Corrected Model | 315.557[a] | 7 | 45.080 | 6.526 | .000 |
| Intercept | 145.156 | 1 | 145.156 | 21.014 | .000 |
| Age | 11.706 | 1 | 11.706 | 1.695 | .196 |
| Post civic | 35.210 | 1 | 35.210 | 5.097 | .026 |
| Group | 86.381 | 2 | 43.191 | 6.253 | .003 |
| Sex | 10.903 | 1 | 10.903 | 1.578 | .212 |
| Group*sex | 7.854 | 2 | 3.927 | .569 | .568 |
| Error | 697.673 | | 101 | 6.908 | |
| Total | 18082.000 | | 108 | | |

[A] R Square = .311 (Adjusted R Square = .264)

From table 4, the F-ratio of interaction effect of sex is 0.569 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significant. There was no significant interaction effect of sex on post-test achievement scores of students who were exposed to the three forms of treatments in Civic Education.

**Discussion**

Analysis of data by ANCOVA revealed that there is significant difference among the three groups. Study Group performed best, followed by the Peer Tutoring group and Conventional Method group. This difference may be accounted for by the instructional advantages of study group and peer tutoring as forms of collaborative learning. Peer tutoring enhances learning by enabling learners to take responsibilities for review, organizing and consolidating existing knowledge and material, understanding its basic structure, filling the gaps and reformulating knowledge into new conceptual frameworks. Use of peers as resources is a powerful strategy for promoting the development of student's higher-level thinking skills. It allows the learners to seek academic assistance from a similar-age peer. Also, peer students experience significant gains in learning as a result of their collaborative interactions (Oluwagbohunmi, 2013).

Similarly, Study Group promotes participation and interaction. It also fosters a deeper and more active learning process (Murphy, 2000). It exposes students to different approaches and ways of thinking. Working with other students in groups can promote a sense of belonging to combat anonymity. It also gives students the opportunity to learn from and teach each other. Study groups help members to improve their class notes through sharing notes; sharing talents; cover more material; makes learning interesting. They are also useful for developing curriculum; creating a collaborative school environment and establishing school reform. This finding supports previous literature on the superiority of study group and peer tutoring as forms of collaborative strategies over the conventional strategies, such as, dominant lecture method for junior secondary students. Previous studies have also established this superiority in other subjects (e.g. Yusuf and Odemuyiwa, 2005, Ifamuyiwa, 2001) in the same environment with this study. This superiority is also being confirmed for the new Civic Education.

Another focus of this study is the effect of gender on mean post-test achievement scores of students exposed to Civic Education under different treatment conditions. The findings revealed that there was no significant effect of gender in the three groups in the post-test civic education, although in the peer tutoring the female had a slight higher performance than their male counterparts. In the study groups the male had slight better performance than the female. In all, there was no significant difference based on gender. This finding of no significant gender effect on student performance supports the conclusion of earlier researchers, such as Ogundare (2000), who examined the extent to which gender, academic achievement in Social Studies and the occupation of the parents of the students could be intervening variables in the citizenship behavior of students within the school purview. He found that the picture was satisfactory and gender had no significant influence. Similarly, Yusuf (2005) found that there was no significant difference in the performance of male and female students taught using cooperative instructional strategy in Social Studies. There appears to be consensus on no significant gender difference in the academic performance in Social Studies. The study of Akinola (2011), even among the teachers, found no significant difference between male and female teachers on their assessment of Civic Education curriculum as an instrument for developing responsible citizens.

This study also examined whether or not there is any significant interaction of gender on post-test achievement scores of students who were exposed to the three forms of treatment in Civic Education. Findings revealed no significant interaction effect of gender. This implies that both male and female students equally gained from study group technique and peer tutoring technique in Civic Education classes. We can account for this sameness of performance of boys and girls partly from the social learning theory. Effective modeling is highly promoted in both peer tutoring and study group. In modeling, Bandura (2001) mentions four opportunities in which both sex could benefit. These are, Attention, Retention, Motor Reproduction (the ability to replicate the behavior that the model has just demonstrated) and Motivation. The effects of all these may also equally benefit both sexes. Also, Ndirika and Ubani (2017) claimed that *a statistically significant difference was found between adjusted mean of the students' ability level and the two techniques used, that is, Peer tutoring and conventional method, implying that there is interaction effect of instructional techniques and ability level on academic achievement of students. In the study conducted by* Yashvinder and Malini (2018), it was concluded that Peer tutoring method helped the students to interact with their fellow peer group and clarify their doubts. They were placed in a more comfortable zone. The students got an opportunity to share their ideas and creativity can also be induced through peer tutoring method.

**Conclusion**

A number of conclusions could be reached from the findings of this study. First, Peer tutoring and Study Group, as two forms of collaborative teaching and learning techniques have proved to be superior in enhancing students' academic achievement in Civic Education to the conventional teaching and learning strategies. As it has been found in other subjects such as sciences, mathematics and business studies, these forms of collaborative techniques prove to be helpful to the teachers and students in reaching higher levels of academic performance.

**Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion above, it is recommended that Social Studies/Civic Education teachers need to accept and put into practice peer tutoring and study group teaching strategies in their classroom and out-of-classroom operations, in order to enhance the academic achievement of their students in Civic Education. At the pre-service stage, universities and college of education that are responsible for the training of Social Studies/Civic Education teachers need to acquaint student-teachers with the detailed processes and merit of these and other forms of collaborative learning techniques. They also have the responsibility of seeing that these techniques are put into practice by the student-teachers during their teaching practice exercises. Also, serving teachers can be helped to update their teaching skills with purposeful and well

executed workshops and seminars on methods of teaching Civic Education. Resource persons for such workshops should be those with proven competence in these techniques. In order to back-up such workshops, teachers should be given self-instructional packages that they can refer to at their leisure time or during their lessons. Indeed the resource person could come up with a magazine, titled, 'Cooperative Learning Magazine', which can be a periodical for the teachers. Such magazine should be light, affordable or even distributed to teachers for free.

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