

# Civic education and its impacts on peace and sustainable development of Bo City

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## Abstract

The general aim of this study was to investigate civic education and its impacts on Peace and Sustainable Development of Bo City. The study area was Bo, which is found in the Southern part of Sierra Leone. According to the 2015 census report, Sierra Leone's population has been on the increase since 1963 census. It increased from 2,180,355 in 1963 to 2,735,159 in 1974 and 3,515,812 in 1985. The sample size comprised of 80 respondents drawn from a targeted population of 100 respondents using purposive sampling technique. The research revealed that civic education impacts sustainable development; while hate speeches from politicians are largely problematic to civic education drives. It also showed that people engage in violence when they are under the influence of drug and alcohol. Also, politicians give their party thugs drugs and alcohol to be able to effectively carry out their destructive acts. It was further stated that people will engage into violent behaviour because they want to protect their political party ideologies. The study recommends that tribalism, regionalism and nepotism be dealt with to facilitate civic education drives of the citizens. That government should encourage the teaching of civic education in both primary and secondary schools and that of tertiary institutions. The establishment of workable institutions that can implement civic education programmes came up very strongly as a recommendation.

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Civic education; peace; development; democracy; violence

## Introduction

The study examines civic education and its impact on peace and sustainable development of Bo. Civic education has a significant impact on democracy. For a democracy to mature, and for citizens to have large saying in the governance of their countries, they should be civic conscious. Why should citizens not prefer going to their farms during Election Day? Why should the youth not engage in violence against their country, destroying state resources, engaging into destructive criticisms? Why should politicians not involve themselves in massive corruption that will degenerate the economy of the state? Why would they not have the desire to stay in power for the rest of their lives thereby provoking military interventions in most cases? Why would the citizens not organize themselves into factions and take up arms and ammunitions against their state as a means to vent out their grievances? All these amount to a civic education that will nurture civic consciousness. Civic education therefore has a strong relationship between peace and sustainable development of any democracy like Sierra Leone.

Margaret Stimmann Branson (1998) opines that Civic Education in a democracy is education in self-government. Democratic self-government means that citizens are actively involved in their own governance; they do not just passively accept the dictums of others or acquiesce to the demands of others. According to Aristotle (c 340 BC, as cited in Margaret Stimmann Branson, 1998), "If liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost." In other words, the ideals of democracy are most completely realized when every member of the political community shares in its governance. Members of the political community are its citizens; hence citizenship in a democracy is membership in the body politic. Membership implies participation, but not participation for participation's sake. Citizen participation in a democratic society must be based on informed, critical reflection, and on the understanding and acceptance of the rights and responsibilities that go with that membership.

Good civic education seeks to develop competence in explaining and analyzing. If citizens can explain how something should work, for example the American federal system, the legal system, or the system of checks and balances, they will be more able to detect and help correct malfunctions. Citizens also need to be able to analyze such things as the components and consequences of ideas, social, political, or economic processes, and institutions. The ability to analyze enables one to distinguish between fact and opinion or between means and ends. It also helps the citizen to clarify responsibilities such as those between personal and public responsibilities or those between elected or appointed officials and citizens. (Margaret Stimmann Branson; 1998).

Prof. Ekundayo J.D. Thompson wrote that Political Literacy and Civic Education Project are designed to increase the level of participation of people in the processes of governance. Informed participation implies informed choices. Knowledge of the issues on which political choices are made is a prerequisite for informed choices. Political Literacy and Civic Education are in the domain of politics and focus on the processes of enhancing people's well-being (Thompson; 2013, pg7). Thompson (2013, pg7) has added that Civic Education emerged as a body of knowledge that encompasses: Political Literacy, Voter Education, Rights Education, Citizenship Education, Peace Education, Education in Democracy, Development Education.

As was put by Levine and Bishai (2010) Citizenship in many ways is very important to turning a society away from violent conflict and toward creating productive political relationships, through which disagreements can be negotiated nonviolently. They added that the importance of citizenship for peacebuilding is tied to the idea of developing the state as an object of primary loyalty, so that citizens of a state are motivated to seek the common good of society and possibly be willing to make sacrifices for other citizens. This aspect of citizenship makes it a valuable peacebuilding concept. Both state building (i.e., creating effective governance institutions) and nation building (i.e., fostering an identity of members of a common social group) are needed for peacebuilding success. Levine and Bishai (2010) believed that participation in governance is a measure of good citizenship, but some types of citizen participation actually contribute to social conflict. When the balance between disagreement and disengagement fails to be struck, groups may address themselves rather than engaging each other, resulting in increasingly negative stereotypes and hardened social lines, even while such speech is conducted publicly as part of political participation.

Matto, McCartney, Bennion, and Simpson (2017: 4) opine that an effective democracy cannot continue to fulfill its goal of taking care of the needs of all of its citizens if its citizens do not

participate. They remarked that at the very least, we need a sizeable, sustainable, and diverse majority to be involved in significant ways. With so many citizens sitting on the sidelines, we cannot succeed. That quality civic education is needed to foster the redevelopment of a knowledgeable, capable, and engaged citizenry. Just after the war in Sierra Leone in 2002, the government as part of his peace building process established and strengthened state institutions and structures to facilitate the process of peacebuilding. These structures set up have not still contributed, to a large extent, to the nature of peace and tranquility necessary for a sustainable development paradigm to be achieved.

Several people have argued that Sierra Leone is a peaceful country due to the fact that it has conducted three democratic elections since the war ended in 2002. This notion is based on the caveat that the guns are silence, no bloodshed; people are not engaged in physical combat and so on. But the reality is that Sierra Leone is not that entirely peaceful as one might think. The Sierra Leonean society is infested with cultural and structural inequality which culminates into violence. This view is supported by Diane L. Moore when he wrote on Johan Galtung typology of violence: "Direct Violence represents behaviors that serve to threaten life itself and/or to diminish one's capacity to meet basic human needs. Examples include killing, maiming, bullying, sexual assault, and emotional manipulation."

Structural Violence represents the systematic ways in which some groups are hindered from equal access to opportunities, goods, and services that enable the fulfillment of basic human needs. These can be formal as in legal structures that enforce marginalization (such as Apartheid in South Africa) or they could be culturally functional but without legal mandate (such as limited access to education or health care for marginalized groups). Cultural Violence represents the existence of prevailing or prominent social norms that make direct and structural violence seem "natural" or "right" or at least acceptable. For example, the belief that Africans are primitive and intellectually inferior to Caucasians gave sanction to the African slave trade. Galtung understands of cultural violence helps explain how prominent beliefs can become so embedded in a given culture that they function as absolute and inevitable and are reproduced uncritically across generations Moore, (2015).

Some youth and adults do not see the need for patriotism and thus allow themselves to be used as bates to perpetrate violence in the society. Countries have witnessed politicians engaging in massive corruption, prolonging their hold on power, plunging their countries into economic devastation. All these amount to bad governance which has often ushered in the military taking over power from the civilian government with the motive to clean the country and return it back to a democratically elected government. All this is happening because some citizens lack civic education and civic consciousness.

This gives enough reasons why civic education should be given priority in our society today. No country has ever developed without a strong civic consciousness being demonstrated by its citizens. Sierra Leoneans should have it in mind that civic education is needed to sustain our constitutional democracy and facilitate peace and sustainable development initiatives. The habits of the mind as well as the habit of the heart, the dispositions that inform the democratic ethos, are not inherited. According to Alex de Tocqueville "each new generation is a new people that must acquire the knowledge, learn the skills, and develop the disposition or traits of private and public characters that undergird constitutional democracy". Those dispositions must be fostered and nurtured by words and study and by power of examples. Democracy is not a 'machine' that would go for itself, but must be consciously reproduced by one generation and the other.

Civic education should therefore be the prime concern. There is no more an important task than the development of an informed, effective and responsible citizenry. Democracy and development are sustained by citizens who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions. It is imperative therefore, that policy makers, educators, civil society, and government try to reintroduce civic education into the learning process of Sierra Leone. It should be a compulsory subject taught from primary right through the university.

### **Review of Related Literature**

The review captured theoretical framework and a review of studies done by other people that were pertinent to the research topic civic education and its impacts on Peace and Sustainable Development of Bo.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

**Conflict Theory:** According to this theory, Karl Marx sees society as an arena of social conflict. To him, function and role of social institutions can be best understood by its economic system. As per his doctrine, social institution; education system strengthens existing class system that contains two main classes: bourgeoisie, haves; and proletariat, have nots. Conflict theory has been used to explain a wide range of social phenomena, including wars, revolutions, poverty, discrimination, and domestic violence. It ascribes most of the fundamental developments in human history, such as democracy and civil rights, to capitalistic attempts to control the masses (as opposed to a desire for social order). Central tenets of conflict theory are the concepts of social inequality, the division of resources, and the conflicts that exist between different socioeconomic classes.

Inequality is considered as an inevitable result of capitalism. Educational system along with other institutions is assumed likely. It exhibits and funds the existing inequalities in the culture through schooling. Now education has turned into an industry which gives birth to a breeding ground and apparatus for reproduction of same social thought over the generations (Greaves, Hill & Maisuria, 2007 as cited in Omer & Jabeen, 2016). This theory can best be applicable to the Sierra Leone situation. Our society is divided between the rulers (politicians) who control the all the state resources, determine to a very large extent who get jobs, and other state opportunities and those of the ruled (the masses). The masses who vote these politicians into office often expect them to function well and create positive changes in the society that would benefit the bulk of the population. Once this expectation is not met, they would become disgruntled and start to criticize the government, engage into unhealthy competition, violence and the like. Conflict theory assumes that the elite will set up systems of laws, traditions, and other societal structures in order to further support their own dominance while preventing others from joining their ranks. Marx theorized that, as the working class and poor were subjected to worsening conditions, a collective consciousness would raise more awareness about inequality, and this would potentially result in revolt.

Academic institutions in Sierra Leone have often gone on strikes because they feel marginalised by the ruling class (the government) regarding their conditions of service. This is exactly what Karl Marx was postulating when he talks about inequality in the distribution of state resources that would inevitably lead to conflict.

## The Impact of Civic Education on Peace in a Democracy

(Branson, as cited in Edeghere; 2014) opines that Civic education as a life-long process is sustained in adults because democracy is flexible and should accommodate new ideas and social issues concerning the citizens. Democracy is not a machine that would go itself. It must be consciously reproduced, one generation after another.

The use of the phrase “citizens in most democracies, especially emerging ones like Nigeria, need civic education” by Francesca Edeghere implies that civic education is not a necessary condition for all democracies. This is considered not true because a democracy that lacks civic education component apart from the education provided by the mainstream always faces several unhealthy challenges in terms of citizens’ loyalty to the state, their active and unconditional involvement into the political life of their country. In Sierra Leone for example, because of the lack of civic education programmes the country faces political, economic and other challenges. For instance, the corruption level in the country is high. I have argued that for a democracy to mature, and for citizens to have large saying in the governance of their countries, they should be civic conscious. This would prevent them from going to their farms during Election Day, prevent the youth from engaging into violence acts against their country, destroying state resources, engaging into destructive criticisms, discourage politicians from involving themselves in massive corruption that will degenerate the economy of the state, and prevent them from holding on power for the rest of their lives thereby provoking military interventions in most cases, and prevent some unwholesome citizens from organizing themselves into factions and take up arms and ammunitions against their state as a means to vent out their grievances.

Prof. Ekundayo J.D. Thompson, a Sierra Leonean Professor writes that Political Literacy and Civic Education Project are designed to increase the level of participation of people in the processes of governance. Informed participation implies informed choices. Political Literacy and Civic Education are in the domain of politics and focus on the processes of enhancing people's well-being (Thompson; 2013:7). He opines that Civic Education in a democracy has emerged as a body of knowledge that encompasses the following: Political Literacy; Voter Education; Rights Education; Citizenship Education; Peace Education; Education in Democracy; Development Education.

The gap in the above argument is the lack of Religious/Moral Education which also plays a critical and vital role in molding the character and mind set of the people. I have strongly argued that moral education can make a valid case because it works closely in line with civic education in the upbringing of children. It feeds citizens with the spiritual fruits needed to be God conscious in every area of life. Homes and religious institutions should be seen as powerful channels for transmitting moral virtues.

Danjuma and Sarki (2015) note that Civic Education can help in combating insurgency in Nigeria by playing the following roles. First, they believe that Civic education inculcates virtues of tolerance, cooperation, patriotism, selflessness, honesty, etc among the citizens. Second, they say that parents and heads of families should work hard to instill the under listed national values in the mind of their various family members: respect for human dignity and human rights; respect for the rule of law; the dignity of honest labour; respect for the constituted authority; the sense of national unity, pride and patriotism; respect and appreciation of social justice. Third, he argues that players at various levels of security agencies

should recognize the values in civic education and live up to their responsibilities. They believe that this will make the leaders in the agencies to be just in their leadership while the subordinates will become patriotic. Though the above research focuses on Nigeria context, yet it is applicable to Sierra Leone. With a well-designed civic education programme that starts from the home to the wider society, Sierra Leoneans will begin to appreciate the value of living for one other, respecting human dignity, and the rule of law, and promoting national cohesion. Because thieves do not know their civic responsibility of protecting each other property, they have resulted to thieving.

(Ahmad; 2003: ps7-9) indicates that democracies need voters' participation, adding that no democracy can survive or be even conceived without active participants. He observes that active participants are not born; they are created through formal and informal education. According to him, Civic participation in a democracy is not limited to voting alone; although voting in periodic elections is most essential for civic participation, it is the minimum of what a good citizen should do. In a democratic society, Ahmed opines that civic participation has a deeper meaning--citizens are free to pick and choose the forms of participation. Citizens can join any political or civic organization. If they wish, they can organize their own civic association for a public cause. They may choose to launch a civil disobedience movement or join a protest rally against government policies on war or some other issue. Citizens can also write letters to newspapers and call radio and television talk shows to vent their views on issues of public interest (Ahmad; 2003: ps7-9)

Edeghere (2014) argues that Democracies are sustained by citizens who have basic knowledge, skills and willpower to participate effectively in how they are governed. However, they have to acquire the required knowledge and skills as well as project the will-power essential to participating in the process. Therefore, citizens in most democracies, especially emerging ones like Nigeria, need civic education. (Branson, 1998 as cited in Edeghere; 2014) opines that Civic education in a democracy is education in self-government, where citizens actively participate in governance and do not see themselves as just tools in the hands of leaders or passive onlookers. Civic education for citizens is based on informed, critical reflection and on the understanding and acceptance of the Rights and Responsibilities that go with being partners in governance. Civic education justifies the common definition of democracy, government of the people, by the people, for the people. Civic education gives "power to the people".

### **Relationships between Civic Education and Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development, as one of the great challenges of our time, is an inclusive concept that applies to all countries of the world; that is, to countries in the northern as much as to those in the southern hemisphere. It is central to all efforts towards the human shaping of the world through globalization. The original motive for sustainable development becoming an action plan for politics, economy and society had been on the one hand the ecological crisis phenomena and on the other hand the social and economic inequality which had been realized and criticized more and more in the 1960s and 1970s (de Haan, 2004, p. 39 as cited in Brunold; 2015)

In 1987, the Brundtland Commission published its report, in an effort to link the issues of economic development and environmental stability. In doing so, this report provided the oft-



cited definition of sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, p. 43 as cited in Brunold; 2015)

In a study by Lukman and Audu; 2014 ES, EFS, and ESD are interchangeable terms describing the practice of teaching for sustainability. Sustainable development has been variously conceived in terms of vision expression (Lee, 1993, as cited in Lukman and Audu (2014), value change (Clark, 1989, as cited in Lukman and Audu, 2014) moral development (Rolston, 1994, as cited in Lukman and Audu, 2014) social reorganization (Gore, 1992 as cited in Lukman and Audu, 2014) or transformational process (Viederman, 1994 as cited in Lukman and Audu, 2014) toward a desired future or better world.

Good civic education seeks to develop competence in explaining and analyzing. If citizens can explain how something should work, for example the American federal system, the legal system, or the system of checks and balances, they will be more able to detect and help correct malfunctions. Citizens also need to be able to analyze such things as the components and consequences of ideas, social, political, or economic processes, and institutions. The ability to analyze enables one to distinguish between fact and opinion or between means and ends. It also helps the citizen to clarify responsibilities such as those between personal and public responsibilities or those between elected or appointed officials and citizens.

Dahal, 2010 as cited in Lukman and Audu, 2014) beyond political reason, Lukman and Audu (2014) noted that the importance of civic education has been recognized in economic status quo of nations. There is a gap in the above argument that this research would want to look at. The question that will emanate from the above assertion is “HOW? It is not clear how civic education has been recognized in economic development of a nation. Going forward, I am adding that for citizens to effectively contribute to the growth of the economy they should be civic conscious to the point that they consider themselves as a major partner to national development. It takes civic education to make a man hold public office and execute his duties and responsibilities without any tribal sentiment attached. It takes civic education that would allow public and private sector workers to avoid large scale bribery and corruption that degenerate the economy of the country. Knowledgeable citizenry supports a more sustainable society in several ways including: They can support government policy related to resource management and civic conduct. They can support measures related to sustainable development and politicians who introduce and support enlightened legislation. Citizens can become knowledgeable consumers who purchase goods with low lifestyle impacts and who use their purchasing power to support corporate social and environmental responsibility and sustainable business practices. An informed citizenry can help communities and governments enact sustainability measures and move towards more sustainable societies.

According to Olaitan, (2013, as cited in Lukman and Audu; 2014) economy of the nation is based on three components namely- state, private sector and cooperative. They opine that if the economy fails to support politics, there will be a lack of participation that ultimately affects democracy, human dignity and values. Adding to the above proposition, I want to argue that politics guides economic activities and economic activities are fundamental to politics. Without civic education; people cannot realize the essence of politics. Civic education teaches people to be responsible and dutiful. Civic education teaches citizens to be good citizen. Indeed, this is a catalyst to development.

(UNESCO, 2005b, Annex II, p. 5 as cited in Brunold, 2015) note that developing a knowledgeable citizenry requires a concerted effort with consistent and realistic messages delivered to people of all ages. The use of large scale media campaigns can reach substantial segments of society. Also, social marketing could be explored to deliver some of the simpler measures that lead to behavioral change. More comprehensive educational tools that focus on the skills inherent in critical thinking and rational decision making are necessary to build a citizenry capable of thinking through some of the more complex sustainability issues that face communities and nations.

The gap in the above argument is the failure to identify the various players that would facilitate the process of developing a knowledgeable citizenry. It would have been more explicitly put if the government, Nongovernmental organizations including the CSOs, the media, teachers, lecturers, national and international partners, the politicians for examples were identified as key players that would concertedly facilitate the civic education programmes for economic growth. Brunold opines that participating for more sustainable societies an active citizenry also needs knowledge and skills regarding democratic citizenship. He indicates that for this task an education for democratic citizenship would be capable as a specific and basic educational tool. He notes that an approach to education for democratic citizenship should aim for the promotion of a culture of democracy and human rights concerning goals like participation, social cohesion or solidarity as well as practices to promote the development of communities committed to genuine relationships. He concludes that Civic Education for sustainable development combines both education for sustainable development and education for democratic citizenship.

To develop public understanding and awareness of sustainability and to make progress towards more sustainable societies requires a population that is aware of the goals of sustainability and has the knowledge and the skills to contribute towards those goals. According to (Gross and Dynneson 1991 as cited in Ntini; 2017) good citizens may be viewed as prerequisites of a good democracy as the fourth pillar whose quality the other three pillars namely the executive, legislature and judiciary are anchored on and depend upon. It may be argued that there exists a strong correlation between civic education and democracy resulting into it being called education for democracy. In this case, they say civic education serves to empower the citizen for full participation in the affairs of the state being a democratic state has the need to ensure that citizens at all levels develop an understanding of this ideology. This according to them will enable them to appreciate the development values, ideals and policies of the state. He further expressed that there is a need by all communities to go beyond just voting but have a mastery of the merits and limitations of the country's democracy. One may persuade for civic education that has the propensity to skill citizens in leadership analysis, understanding and comparing manifestos of political parties, monitoring parliamentarians and holding them accountable for their decisions and effectively influencing policymaking processes at any level.

The above is a misnomer in the Sierra Leone context. For example, citizens are denied the rights to civic education because of the fact that the politicians do not want them to be enlightened so that they would not be able to challenge their political odds. Instead, what is normally done is the implementation of Neopatrimonial political system and the principles of rent seeking. Here, politicians usually grant special favour to their party supporters in terms



of job opportunities and state benefits in order to shut their mouths from criticizing their odds. The opposition is often oppressed and intimidated for speaking out or for criticizing the ruling government.

Most messages politicians preach are inciting in themselves. They have divided the country into fractions and regions which has caused a permanent crack on national cohesion. For example, the APC considers the Northern region and some parts of Freetown to be their political strongholds while the SLPP sees the South and Eastern regions as their strongholds. With this kind of political and regional divides perpetrated by the wrong messages passed on by the politicians to their parties supporters instilling hatred in the minds of Sierra Leoneans against each other, coupled with the unequal distribution of state resources favouring the region whose party is in governance, has often resulted to conflict and political upheavals. We saw this in the Ernest Bai Koroma's past regime where infrastructural development was largely focused on the northern region. Similar behaviour is also evident in the few years of political dispensation of the Bio's government.

Civic education may be a very convenient strategy of penetrating communities to educate or orient all members of society on the need and importance of respecting national assets. Good citizenship respects all infrastructure set up for the development of communities and any unbecoming behavior out of any motive that seeks to negate the development needs to be removed from society. Civic education cultivates patriotism by forging a common national identity through community development. Whilst there are high possibilities of affecting it through formal education, there are those citizens who have dropped out of school, those whose curricula did not include civic education, and others that did not get the chance to get formal education. Civic education disseminated through community development is likely to benefit these citizens. It may be argued that community development workers need to be equipped with a strong foundation of civic education to be able to disseminate it through community development to create the desired citizen.

### Challenges Facing Civic Education Programmes

Idowu (2017) states "available authorities revealed that implementation of policy and programmes has been an incontrovertible problem and issue not only in Nigeria but in Africa and even developed democracies". He cites Ejere, (2011) that confirmed this by submitting that it is hardly debatable that implementation is the bane of public policies and programmes in Nigeria. He went further to state that a well formulated policy or programme is useless if not properly implemented as its stated objectives will not be realized'.

Kidwell, 2005, as cited in Idowu, (2017) writing on the implementation of civic education in the United States infers that the absence of high quality implementation of civic education curriculum programme may have adverse effects on the teaching of civic concepts, values and skills that reinforce reasoned decision-making skill, evaluation of information, practical application of civic virtues and an in-depth understanding of citizenship responsibility. He further submitted that, in the United States, though the goals of a strong civic education programme are touted in almost every school mission statement, little effort is made towards achieving the goals because of poor implementation. 'Civic education, as determined by state policy in US, remains underemphasized in classrooms of all grade levels due substantially to implementation oversight.

Idowu, 2017) further argues that there is an inconsistency in policies / programmes formulation. He adds that policies / programmes change like the wind vane with every successive government. He cites an example of a previous programme in the sector that suffered implementation failure was the UPE programme which was the forerunner to the present UBE programme. According to him the UBE programme was introduced in 1999 seemingly as a replacement for the UPE programme which was launched in 1976 but later abandoned. But the UBE, like the UPE before it, is experiencing implementation difficulties.

Yuen, (2016) identified the following challenges facing civic education in Honkong:

### *Lack of status, identity, and even presence:*

He argues that Civic education was deliberately suppressed by the colonial government since 1950s to counter the threat to legitimacy and stability; that the impetus given to it in 1980s and 1990s was largely nominal. He opines that the scenario didn't change after 1997 although the new government wants to imbue a sense of national identity among the students.

### **Insufficient Staff Training**

Yuen, (2016) notes that a teacher in his focus group interview narrated, "Teachers responsible for teaching civic education are mostly not well trained or untrained and they do not have much political awareness." He affirms that this was quickly endorsed by other teachers in the focus group. He expresses that a number of factors contribute to this including Civic education training has never been a mandatory part of professional training leading to certification. The colonial government, and its successor after 1997, didn't really invest in training of civic education teachers.

This challenge is not only limited to Hong Kong but in Sierra Leone as well. The politicization of government functionaries has affected not only civic education system but almost every facet of the society, including the mainstream educational system. The focus of every ruling government is on how to make money and gather the country's resources at the detriment of the country, increasing their salaries and leaving out key developmental issues to perish. For example, the current ruling SLPP falsely considered education as a main development and flagship agenda, but this has taken a u-turn that lecturers now go on strike for poor conditions of services. Majority of teachers who have been pin coded have still not received salaries to the time of writing this research. Even the few who are paid did not receive their back lodge salaries after teaching for several years without salary. This has affected the educational systems of Sierra Leone including civic education programmes.

As it stands there is no civic education curriculum developed which is also a main challenge. Civic Education used to be taught in Social Studies as a topic and not as a subject. Even though efforts are made by the government to develop a national teaching curriculum of civic education yet it has not been fully materialized. Even with the proposed curriculum development framework in mind it only captures primary and JSS classes.

### **Summary**

Democracies are sustained by citizens who have basic knowledge, skills and will-power to participate effectively in how they are governed. However, they have to acquire the required

knowledge and skills as well as project the will–power essential to participating in the process. Therefore citizens in most democracies, especially emerging ones like Sierra Leone, need civic education. Civic education in a democracy is education in self-government, where citizens actively participate in governance and do not see themselves as just tools in the hands of leaders or passive onlookers.

Civic education is effective when it is realistic and addressing the central truths of political life of the citizens. It is not limited to the formal education of children and youths but it is a life-long process. It starts from the home, when children are taught the ethos of their culture. Civic education is usually included in the school curriculum to enhance values and norms acquired from home. Civic education as a life-long process is sustained in adults because democracy is flexible and should accommodate new ideas and social issues concerning the citizens. Citizen education ensures that power and authority entrusted to the leaders by the citizens must be balanced by their service and accountability to the citizens.

Conclusively, some youth and adults do not see the need to be patriotic and thus allow themselves to be used as bates to perpetrate violence in the society. Countries have witnessed politicians engaging in massive corruption, prolonging their holds on power, plunging their countries into economic devastation.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to collect accurate data from respondents. Data were gathered through both primary and secondary sources, including questionnaires, internet materials, interviews, and observations. The research design was descriptive in nature, as the data collected from respondents were converted into percentages and analyzed.

### **Sample Size and Selection Procedure**

The study focused on Civic Education and its impact on Peace and Sustainable Development in Bo city. The total population of the study area was 174,369 according to the 2015 population and Housing census. Retrieved from ([www.citypopulation.de/en/sierraleone/admin/bo/3191\\_bo/](http://www.citypopulation.de/en/sierraleone/admin/bo/3191_bo/); at 2:27pm). This population comprised of all parents, civic education teachers, counselors and the council chairperson in Bo town, lecturers, youth, media practitioners, religious leaders, and ministry of education officials. The sample size comprised of 80 respondents drawn from a targeted population of 100 respondents including 5 counselors, 1 council chairperson, 10 Media Practitioners, 15 Youth, 10 Lecturers, 10 Social Studies Teachers, 10 Ministry of Education Officials, 9 Religious Leaders (4 imams and 5 pastors), and 10 civil society activists. The sampling procedure involved the purposive randomized selection of 80 households from where the research participants were drawn.

The choice of sample was influenced by the fact that they gave relevant information for this study. The youth who constituted larger percentage of the total population were often used by politicians to perpetrate violence; therefore, this research largely focused on them. The lecturers and teachers who are the certified transmitters of knowledge made up of 10 participants each to grab their perceptions about the topic matter. The Ministry of education

officials also were chosen because they are the champions of literacy programmes of the population. Their inputs into the research work were considered worthwhile. Religious leaders were chosen on the grounds that they are responsible especially for the moral and spiritual modeling of the citizens. Their inputs added weight to the final analysis of this work. The civil society activists were also vital for this study because they are to influence government policies on behalf of the citizens. And finally the politicians (Counselors and council chairperson) because of the type of messages they pass to the youths and the general population when they are seeking for election offices.

### **Data Collection**

Two sources of data were used for this study and they included: Primary data and Secondary data. Using the primary methods of data collection, first hand data was collected from respondents through questionnaires, focus group discussions and observations. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and collected on a stated date. Materials from the library; and the internet were made use of. The researcher also extracted Information from journals, articles and newspaper on civic education, peace and sustainable development. These secondary data gave the needed literature for this research work. This information fell under the category of secondary data because the materials had already been collected by other people.

### **Data Analysis**

The questionnaires were utilized as the main instrument of data collection for this study. Data from questionnaires were analysed using tables and descriptive statistical analysis to throw light on the research questions. Numbers, percentages, tabular presentations of responses and graphs were used to illustrate the findings of the study. Qualitative data from interviews and documentary sources supplemented the questionnaire data. Some observations made were made use of to enrich interpretation of the data. The discussions, conclusions and recommendations were drawn based on the research findings.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The study was carried out to investigate "Civic Education and its Impacts on Peace and Sustainable Development of Bo City". The specific objectives were to assess the respondents' profiles, identify the level of civic education in the study area, determine the impact of civic education on peace in a democracy, examine the relationship between civic education and sustainable development, and identify challenges facing civic education programmes and to proffer recommendations to the problems facing civic education.

Data was collected and collated from 80 research participants and the following were the major findings of the research. The study revealed more male respondents than female respondents and their age ranged from 16-26 years, and more singles at the time of the research. Those who have had some formal types of education were in the majority and more of the respondents were employed but received insufficient monthly income. The study further revealed that civic education trainings is common amongst members in the study area. Since politicians are largely the providers of civic education during political campaigns, it is not sustainable as the aim of the politicians during such time is to accumulate large percentage of

votes from the populace and form the government. Finally, the study showed that majority of respondents had medium level of civic understanding. It was indicated that civic education can contribute to peace and democracy to a greater extent. But some factors such as hate speeches by politicians can greatly contribute to youth violence and that lack of civic education can lead to bribery and corruption and consequently to conflict. Majority of the respondents defined peace as basically the presence of justice in society and civic education can produce responsible citizens in a democracy and thereby promoting peace.

The study revealed that all the respondents had an idea about sustainable development and they indicated that civic education and sustainable development have unique relationships in that both influence each other. They had defined sustainable is a development that which meets the needs of the current generation. Sustainable development as was revealed can best flourish in the midst of civic education and that for citizens to fully participate in sustainable development drives they should have the requisite knowledge and skills in democratic citizenship, hence, civic education for sustainable development considers education for sustainable development and that of education for democratic citizenship. Bribery and corruption have greatly affected civic education programmes and until they are rooted out sustainable development drive can be affected to a greater extent.

Patriotism which is love for one's country can affect civic education programme if it is lacking amongst the citizens. The study showed that civic education programme is largely crippled and frustrated due to political interference or the lack of political will and that the politicization of government functionaries can affect civic education. Untrained and unqualified teachers handling civic education programmes is a complete misnomer to the full realization of the aims of civic education in the study area. Politicians contribute to most of youth violence through their hate speeches as revealed in the research. These hate speeches will have the potential to divide the citizens especially the youth population into unhealthy fractions against the state. Tribalism, nepotism, and regionalism are the major challenges affecting civic education initiatives. This means that and until they rooted out of our society citizens' civic education programmes will continue to be an illusion.

### Conclusion

It can be concluded that civic education greatly impacts the successful implementation of sustainable development. But hate given by politician will continue to affect civic education drive if not dealt with in its entirety. This is because these hate speeches, to a very large extent, have been the motivating forces for youths' engagement into destructive violence against each other and the state. People engage in violence for various reasons including being under the influence of drug and alcohol. Politicians give their party thugs drugs and alcohol so that they will be able to effectively carry out their destructive acts on their fellow contestants. They also engage in violence because they want to protect their political party ideologies. The research also presented the caveat that the lack of civic education or orientation by citizens pushes them into corruption. Put it other way, a very strong civic conscious people will be patriotic, the love for one's country that will motivate them to carry out their responsibilities consciously and constrains them from engaging into any acts that will bring disrepute to themselves and their country. We learnt from the research finding that political interference or the lack of political will can grossly affect civic education programme. This is because it is the responsibility of the state government to cater for the educational needs of its citizens

supported by other stakeholders and not the other way round. Therefore if the government shies away from this responsibility then it will be difficult for civic education to be adequately provided for its citizen.

## Recommendations

Based on the study, it could be recommended that:

- There should be strong salary motivation for all workers especially those that will be in charge of civic education programmes;
- The government should encourage the teaching of civic education in our primary and secondary schools to improve the mind sets of children;
- The government should foster a peaceful, just and inclusive society free from fear and intimidation for leaning where learning can flourish;
- The government should include the teaching of civic education into the curriculum of educational institutions not only for primary and secondary schools but for tertiary institutions including colleges and universities.
- There should be an establishment of workable institutions that can implement civic education programmes;
- Politicians should forget about their long term stay in power and concentrate on the smooth running of the state so that citizens are treated fairly devoid of sacred cows syndrome;
- Civil society groups should campaign against tribalism and regional politics that can negatively impact civic education programmes;
- Hate speeches given by politicians in their political campaigns should be given a strong condemnation as this will foster a peaceful atmosphere for electioneering process;
- Political parties should be seen in the implementation drive of civic education programmes not only during their political campaigns time, but on regular basis;
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOS) should also include civic education programmes in their development drives.
- Government should fight against poverty by creating job opportunities for its citizens;
- Government should train specific people to be in charge of delivery civic education training.
- Even though all recommendations are vital, but the majority of respondents are emphasizing on given zero tolerant to tribalism, regionalism and nepotism. This will help to reduce the level of corruption and violence that are inimical to civic education programmes and sustainable development and that government should encourage the teaching of civic education in our primary and secondary schools to improve the mind set of children. The saying goes catch them when they are young.

## Declarations

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