

## Challenges of Teaching Citizenship Education Topics at Senior Secondary School Level in Botswana

Reginald Oats\*

University of South Africa, Botswana, South Africa

### Research Article

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#### \*For Correspondence

Reginald Oats, University of South Africa,  
Botswana, South Africa, Tel: 4630448/74002917.

**E-mail:** reginaldoats@yahoo.com

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#### ABSTRACT

Citizenship Education is not a new phenomenon, in fact, it is an old concept. The concept dates back to the time before African Nations came in contact with European Nations. Hence in the African context, Citizenship Education did exist in pre-colonial African societies. In the case of Botswana, Matebele (2005) indicates that Botswana's Social Studies curriculum for citizenship education has emerged because of the need for its citizen to take active part in the change and development which have been occurring since independence. The essence of CE therefore is to transform students into active participants in the affairs of their country.

### INTRODUCTION

CE also results into building competent and accountable citizens who are dedicated and committed to the values and principles of democracy<sup>[1]</sup>. It is believed that Social Studies education promotes social responsibility, dedication and commitment to one's work and empathy towards others. Over and above all, Social Studies transmits a set of knowledge, skills values and attitudes necessary for effective citizenship. The body of knowledge, skills and values attitudes which learners acquire promote their critical thinking, problem solving ability and effective decision making and hence enable them to neutralise the challenges they encounter in their societies. Marshall divided citizenship into three categories, namely civil, political, and social. The civil aspect of citizenship provides citizens with individual rights such as the right to own property, freedom of speech, and equality before the law. The political aspect offers citizens the chance to exercise political power by participating in the political process. The social aspect gives to citizens the education, welfare, and health needed to participate in their cultural communities and in the national civic culture.

### EXPERIMENTAL

While the above body of knowledge which comes through CE sounds enterprising, the million dollar question is, whether the teaching of social studies has activated effective citizenship in learners. This scenario creates room and necessity for an evaluation in the form of research of this nature which seeks to find out the challenges teachers face in teaching CE topics at senior secondary school level in Botswana.

#### Statement of the problem

In the endeavour for nation building, the Government of Botswana has invested tremendously in the education system. The country has had several subjects both theoretical and practical introduced into school curriculum as foundation for nation building. For this reason and from the onset, citizenship was transmitted through socialisation and the use of initiation schools to instil citizenship rights and errands. This process however did not realise the expected outcomes in the outcomes in the form of effective participation in national activities because students did not get a grasp of the complexity of the scope of Citizenship Education. In addition, learners could not see the full extent of the factors interacting in what makes up Citizenship Education. The scenario later resulted into the incorporation of Citizenship Education into formal education curriculum.

Citizenship Education through Social Studies is also taught by teachers who may not be conversant with the complex nature of the dimensions and scope of Citizenship Education. This state of affairs may result in superficial treatment of Citizenship Education in Botswana schools; hence the main aim to produce democratic citizenry may be an illusion.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges of teaching of Citizenship Education Topics at Senior Secondary School Level Botswana. Specifically the study explores the challenges of teaching Citizenship Education topics at the classroom setting in relation to teacher training and availability of educational resources.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this investigation are the challenges faced by teachers of Social Studies in teaching Citizenship Education topics in the classroom relative to:

1. Teacher training
2. Educational resources

### **Literature Development citizenship education in Botswana**

In the context of Botswana, the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation (1990) outlines that Citizenship Education in Botswana has gone through three (3) distinct phases. These are: (i) Citizenship Education by traditional Tswana society, (ii) Citizenship Education during the colonial period and (iii) Social Studies as citizenship Education.

During the first phase, Citizenship Education was transmitted by traditional Tswana society. This giant task was done through integration of elements of history, culture, Tswana values, and beliefs. In addition, initiation schools commonly known as bogwera and bojale for males and females respectively were used to implant citizenship principles. At these schools, young people were taught adult responsibilities. To the Tswana society, a common achievement was when a good citizen would fit into and share the benefits of larger traditional society.

The second phase in citizenship Education came with the colonial period. The advent of European powers accompanied by the introduction of Western form of education culminated into a change in Citizenship Education as it was known among Tswana societies. One feature of formal education was its Western point of reference and hence was skewed towards western values. Among others, these included: individualism and European interpretation of the world. To realise these goals, Western education turned traditional Botswana history and culture into courses such as Geography and History of western civilisation and religion.

The third phase of Citizenship Education came to the fore after independence. This phase is known as Social Studies as Citizenship Education in Botswana. With the coming of independence the Government of Botswana developed a new set of obligations and loyalties. Simply put, citizenship training that emphasised and promoted cultures of other nations was considered irrelevant in the Botswana context. The result was the development of a new Citizenship Education. Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation (1990) indicates that the new formal education in citizenship after independence focused on Botswana and included experience of Traditional Tswana family, ethnic groups, and the nation at large.

This means that the new Citizenship Education aims at engaging students in meaningful discussions that involve assessment of the nation's problems and developments and go beyond national boundaries in their assessment of issues. In the new Citizenship Education, Social Studies was introduced into the school curriculum as Citizenship Education. Therefore as Citizenship Education, Social Studies is expected to engage in the production of democratic citizenry. That is, by the end of the programme, the learners should be aware of both human and social issues at stake within their societies and be active and responsible in all their endeavours in a democratic temperament.

It is worth noting that the Social Studies tradition used in Botswana is the citizenship transmission tradition. This tradition entails a teaching mode in which teachers determine that certain behaviours, knowledge, values are learned by their students.

This study is deemed essential because it deals with a topic that is critical in contributing to among others, maintaining peace and tranquility and therefore enhancing nation building. That is to say, the Ministry of Education expects the Social Studies curriculum at all levels to transmit citizenship skills and knowledge to the students. As a matter of fact, this study aims to investigate, the challenges of teaching C.E topics at Senior Secondary School level in Botswana. It is believed the unveiling of such challenges will result to the development of proper techniques, strategies and mechanisms to address those challenges and in the process Citizenship Education will be more effective. Ndwapu concurs that, for Social Studies teaching and learning to be considered appropriate and adequate, it has to use methods of teaching that are geared towards Citizenship Education <sup>[2]</sup>.

### **Challenges of teaching citizenship education**

According to Farrant teacher training occurs in three stages of pre-service, induction and in-service training. Pre-service teacher training is provided in colleges of education and universities and involves the inculcation of relevant knowledge and skills needed to teach a particular discipline. The second stage, *induction*, begins the moment the student-teacher assumes full responsibility of a professional teacher. At this stage, the teacher is not fully equipped and for this reason is described as being on probation. In Botswana this takes a full year. During this interlude, the teacher receives guidance and assistance from the older teachers in the field. Induction therefore advances the student into the reality of the teacher's job and enables him to plug any gaps that may be revealed in his or her pre-service training <sup>[3]</sup>. The last phase is in-service training. This is an endless stage where teachers continuously receive training to be able to deal with emerging teaching challenges.

The Study conducted by Mantebel describes *the role of teaching and learning Social Studies in cultivating democratic principles among junior secondary school students in Botswana* <sup>[4]</sup>. The findings of the research revealed that there is a relationship between learning and student involvement. That is to say, in active learning, students appear to be associated with greater achievement and development of cognitive capacity and these elements of Citizenship Education. Oats conducted a study on the responsiveness of social studies teacher training curriculum towards democratic citizenship education and reveals that the curriculum does have concept on CE but that it is also a bit doubtful that citizenship education concepts do not clearly appear unless hidden in other themes. Effective transmission of citizenship education requires teachers who are up to the challenge and have a solid understanding of the basic concepts and ideals of citizenship education <sup>[5]</sup>. Thus this study is prompted by the belief that teacher trainees need to be exposed to deeper citizenship ideals in order for them to understand concepts and teach them meaningfully.

With regards to challenges of teaching C.E. relative to educational resources, Banks and Banks (1999) alert that students need a wide range of resources to be able to solve the problems and challenges they encounter in Social Studies <sup>[6-8]</sup>. The researchers support the interdisciplinary nature of Social Studies. That is, Social Studies draws its subject matter from different Social Sciences and Humanities and as such needs variety of resources and material for it to be effective. When assortments of resources are available for use, both teachers and students will be able to choose what is appropriate for different learning situations.

Magole conducted a study on, *the use of instructional media in the teaching of Social Studies*. The study focused on Colleges of Education in Botswana<sup>[9]</sup>. The study aimed to investigate the utilisation of instructional media in the teaching of Social Studies in the Colleges of Education. In particular, the study sought to find out the extent of awareness of instructional media among Social Studies lectures in the colleges of Education. The second task was to find out whether Social Studies were trained in using instructional media during pre-service and in-service training. In addition, the study wanted to find out the level of instructional media utilisation by Social Studies lecturers in Colleges of Education.

The conclusion drawn from the study showed that there was low level of awareness on projected, audio and computer media. It also emerged that there was low level of training in the selection of a variety of instructional media during training. In addition, it was also realised that there was low level of awareness, provision and utilisation of instructional media in the Colleges of Education<sup>[10]</sup>.

### Research design

The study used a descriptive survey. According to Gay, a descriptive survey is a study designed to find information about the state of things at a given place or area. In particular, the study used a simple descriptive survey type. A survey serves to collect representative data for a relevant population of the study <sup>[11]</sup>. It was found that a survey would be the best approach for this study because the researcher wanted to investigate the challenges teachers encounter in teaching Citizenship Education topics in connection to teacher training, and availability of resources.

The study took a mixed design route by employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Specifically, data was collected through observation technique and administration of questionnaire. These methods characterise a survey design. It was envisaged that the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches would work in a complementary fashion. That is, lesson observations enable the researcher to capture the human meaning of social life as it is experienced and lived by participants. In addition, the qualitative approach allowed the researcher to be part of the situation and as such was able to engage in lesson observations where teachers were teaching Citizenship Education topics. This allowed the researcher to capture the deepest feelings and assumptions of different Social Studies teachers towards teaching Citizenship Education. Merriam emphasised that in qualitative study interpretations of realities are different. These different interpretations helped the researcher understand the study at hand from a holistic point of view. On the other hand, the quantitative approach enabled the ease of data quantification <sup>[9]</sup>.

### Population and sampling

The population of the study was made by 30 social studies teachers in senior secondary schools in the south and central regions. Ten schools were randomly selected from which three teachers were again randomly selected to take part in the study. At schools which only had three teachers it meant all of them were requested to take part.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Objective 1: Challenges of teaching C.E. relative to teacher training

The objective was addressed by items no: 15-19 of open-ended items. The research items in this section were analysed individually since they requested for teachers' opinions on the challenges they encounter in the teaching of C.E. topics. Thus there was no set criterion for answering them. Question 15: What do you understand by the concept Citizenship Education? The responses to this question were grouped together and put in the table below according to frequencies and % of the number of responses.

**Table 1.** Total number of teachers receiving training on C.E.

Responses	F	%
It is about learning to live together as a community	4	15.38
Teaching about how one becomes a member of a country	9	34.6
Teaching about the country, Government and activities of the government	4	15.38
Knowing citizenship obligations and participating at all levels	6	23.07
Equipping learners with knowledge and skills to participate in country's affairs	3	11.5

The **Table 1** shows that, to majority of teachers C.E. is teaching about how one becomes a member of a country, that is, 9 or 34.6% of the sampled responded. Six (6) or 23.07% others said that C.E. is about knowing citizenship obligations and participating at all levels. Four (4) or 15.38% and another 4 or 15.38% said it is about learning to live together as a community and teaching about the country, governance and activities of the government. Three (3) or 11.5% others indicated that C.E. is about equipping learners with knowledge and skills to participate in the country's affairs.

In order to find out whether teachers received adequate training to handle C.E. topics, the researcher asked the following open-ended question **Table 2**.

**Table 2.** Response for the Question 16: How have you been exposed to C.E.?

Responses	F	%
Learnt during teacher preparation	8	30.7
Attended workshops	4	15.38
Read from books	5	19.23
Not exposed	6	23.07
Through teaching in Social Studies	3	11.5

A number of responses were given to the question among which emerged the following groupings: learnt about C.E. during teacher preparation with 8 or 30.7%, not exposed with 6 or 23.07% and 5 (19.23%) respondents indicated that they read about C.E. from books. The 4 others representing 15.38% indicated that they attended workshops to learn about C.E while the last 3 or 11.5% said they learnt in the process of teaching Social Studies (**Table 3**).

**Table 3.** Response for Question 17: Have you encountered some challenges with the teaching of C.E. topics? (State the challenges).

Responses	F	%
No challenges	7	26.9
Lack of resources/materials	10	38.46
Lack of previous exposure to the concept	4	15.38
Students confusing concepts	2	7.69
Slow learners not keen to learn C.E topics	3	11.5

The responses to the objective on this item were as follows: ten (10) or 38.46% of the respondents indicated that lack of resources/materials such as textbooks is a serious challenge in teaching C.E. Seven (7) or 26.9% indicated that they have no challenges whatsoever in teaching C.E. It is suspected these respondents did not understand the depth of the question. Four (4) or 15.38% said that lack of previous exposure to C.E. is a challenge while the other 3 or 11.5% slower learners who are not keen to learn C.E topic pose a challenge. Only 2 or 7.69% indicated that their challenge was the fact that students confuse C.E concepts.

In order to find out the type of teaching technique mostly used for C.E. topics, the following question was asked to respondents:

**Table 4.** Response for Question 18: What teaching techniques do you use mostly in teaching Citizenship Education topics?

Responses	F	%
Discussion (class and group)	10	38.46
Debates	2	7.69
Lecture	9	34.6
Question and answer	1	3.8
Research and presentation	4	15.38

The above **Table 4** shows that majority of teachers favour the discussion techniques for C.E. topics. This was revealed by 10 or 38.46% who responded that they mostly use discussion for C.E. lessons. This was followed by 9 or 34.6% who indicated that they use lecture technique. These respondents explained their responses by highlighting that due to pressure from a packed syllabus the lecture technique remains the most suitable for all topics. Other respondents indicated that they use research, debates and question and answer.

Item 19, related to the above item by seeking to ask respondents their views on the most appropriate teaching technique for C.E. topics.

The responses gathered indicated that majority felt the most appropriate technique is the discussion because it gives learners an opportunity to share ideas in the process undergoes critical thinking which is necessary in C.E. Some respondents favoured debates while a good number (6 or 23.07%) was for the lecture technique. Those who favoured the lecture technique argued that it is the simplest and fastest technique especially in view of the fact that there is no enough time to cover the Social Studies syllabus.

The findings on objective 1 indicate that majority of teachers have a narrow understanding to C.E. A large number of educators see C.E. as mere membership to a country. Therefore, this is a challenge to teacher training institutions to include elements of C.E. on Social Studies curriculum and that of other related disciplines such as History, Geography, Environmental Science and Sociology at teacher presentation stage. This also calls for the Ministry of Education to re-visit their strategies on deployment of Social Studies teachers to schools. It appears that the Ministry of Education’s strategy of deploying graduates from any Social Science and Humanities fields to teach Social Studies does not work.

It also appears that teachers do not have adequate training to handle C.E. topics. For instance, when asked to state how they have been exposed to C.E., only 8 or 30.7% indicated that they learnt during teacher preparation while the rest indicated responses such as, attended workshops, read from books and learnt through teaching Social Studies. To make matter worse, 6 or 23.07% indicated that they have no exposure C.E. On this observation, there is room to argue that C.E. topics are taught by teachers who are not adequately exposed to the concept and this questions the country’s goal of forging for a democratic dispensation.

The results also show that teachers are faced with numerous challenges in their endeavour to teach C.E. Top on the list is the acute shortage of resources/material. This condition is probably due to the fact that Social Studies is a new comer at Senior Secondary School level. Other constraints to effective C.E. delivery ranged from teachers’ lack of previous exposure, students’ confusing concepts such as rights and responsibilities and that slow learners are not keen to learn C.E. topics.

Mixed views also emerged from the findings pertaining to the teaching techniques for C.E. topics. It was noted as a credit that majority favoured the discussion technique. This is the requirement of C.E; that students be given a chance to scrutinize issues of diverse nature and pass judgements based on rationality. Majority of these were teachers who had specialised at teacher preparation in the fields of Social Studies and History. Hence it can be argued that Social Studies and History specialists for some extent stand a better chance in using appropriate techniques and approaches for C.E. topics. Dube and Moffat <sup>[3]</sup> on the teaching and learning of cultural studies at lower primary school level in Botswana posit that teachers showed a lack of content integration and this made it virtually impossible to effectively achieve the envisaged thematic strands of the subjects <sup>[10]</sup>. This is an issue of concern. Another concern noted from findings is that a good number of respondents favoured the lecture technique arguing that the syllabus is bulky.

**Objective 2: Challenges of teaching CE relative to educational resources.**

The objective is addressed by items 23 and 24 of the teachers’ open ended questionnaire.

**Table 5.** Response for Question 23: Do you consider the resources/material available in your school sufficient to facilitate teaching C.E? (Explain)

Response	F	%
No, there is nothing at all	25	96.2
Partly	1	3.8

The **Table 5** above reveals that a majority of 25, representing 96.2% of the sampled respondents indicated that there are no resources at all in their schools to support the teaching of C.E. topics. Only 1 or 3.8% of the respondents indicated that they partly consider the resources as sufficient <sup>[11-13]</sup>. However, this respondent did not qualify what they meant by stating what is available in their schools to support C.E. and areas of shortage.

In order to find out the type of educational resources/materials teachers would like to have to facilitate the teaching of C.E, the researcher asked the respondents the following open-ended question:

Question 24: Can you give examples of resources/materials/apparatus you would like to have to aid in teaching C.E. topics? (Explain).

In response to the above question, teachers listed the likes of textbooks for students to augment what they learn in class, computers for internet research, Citizenship Act, Pamphlets on International Citizenry and charts on the organs of the state <sup>[14]</sup>.

### CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the findings above that lack of appropriate educational resources is a serious impediment to C.E. It appeared from the findings that, since Social Studies was first piloted in 2000 at Senior Secondary Schools there has never been a recommended student or teacher textbook. This leaves teachers with no other option but to develop their own notes to address different syllabus objectives. It is therefore argued that the scenario could be attributed to as one of the root causes of teachers' different viewpoints on a number of issues. The persistence of this would not be healthy for the development of Social Studies Education in the country, particularly C.E as a part of Social Studies Curriculum.

Observations from the reviewed literature are that it is imperative for Social Studies to be taught by teachers with full understanding of the complexities of the scope and width of the concept of C.E. Hence literature reviewed points to the need for effective teacher-training programmes for C.E to realise the national vision of the development of the holistic individual. It has also emerged from the literature that C.E requires the use of diverse educational resources and the use of multiplicity of techniques and strategies to enhance learning for all learner groupings.

A key issue that has been highlighted by the purpose of this study is the central role that can be played by the teachers to stimulate and enhance the teaching of C.E. The results of the study suggest that teachers need to be developed fully relative to C.E if the goal of C.E has to be apprehended. Fundamentally put, teacher preparation programmes at training institutions should include content, and teaching methodologies on C.E topics. This position is supported by Tabulaw, who maintains that both teacher educators and teachers need re-orientation and re-training without which instructional reforms will forever be just a tantalizing mirage. The position of this study is that Social Studies teachers can increase C.E principles and ideals to their students but only by becoming more informed and sensitive to C.E. themselves. The study also shows that there is need to extend research on C.E. beyond the confines of Social Studies teachers to students who receive the education and to the school at large and possibly into the larger community.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this investigation, the following recommendations are made:

The finding reveal the need for inclusion of more active content on CE content and methodology of teaching Social Studies pre-service courses. In addition, teacher training institutions such as colleges of education and the University of Botswana should come up with CE resources centres to help them promote participation on daily bases and further be used as training resources.

To address the challenges of limited educational materials for CE, schools should use their facilities and expertise to develop relevant materials for use. Schools could even have create material development units not only for CE but to supplement the entire resources where gaps are evident. This could be done in a less expensive manner by using the same teacher and eventually schools could have banks of resources. This could be done partly by down loading from the internet information that they could either directly use or modify for use in their transmission of CE content.

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