



CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: A CATALYST FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract: With Nigeria's long history, great natural and human resource endowment, and scientific and technological advancements, one would expect that a stable national integration of the country's society would have been created long ago. However, the current situation in Nigeria suggests that the journey thus far has left much to be desired, and national integration has become a non-issue in national debate. As a result of the country's current challenges, many people have called for secession, while others have advocated for restructuring, and true federalism can be traced back to the country's multicultural makeup. As a result, the goal of this essay is to look at the function of citizenship education in Nigeria's national integration process in order to come up with a solution to the country's current problems. Citizenship education has been defined as the development and production of active citizens who are socially responsible, socially sensitive, socially adaptable, and socially intelligent members of their immediate environment and larger society. The paper concluded by maintaining that true integration would be ushered in by a sincere and intentional commitment among Nigeria's numerous peoples to truthful living and peaceful cohabitation, ushering in a progressive nation working toward long-term development for the sake of current and future generations. Finally, it was recommended among others, that all Nigeria citizens should endeavour to imbibe the culture of accommodating and working with others in a manner that promote national integration and unity.

Keywords: Citizens, Nigeria, Society, Citizenship Education, National Integration.

INTRODUCTION

Every country on the earth hopes for quick social, economic, cultural, and technological advancement, which is dependent on a variety of natural factors. Quality democratic leadership, citizen patriotism, national consciousness, science and technology, rational application of available natural and human resources, morality and self-will, and, above all, harmonious and peaceful coexistence among all ethnic groups are all important factors in Nigeria's development as one indivisible nation. A country exists to achieve the ultimate goal of nationhood; if it does not, it will serve two unintended, inevitable purposes: a convenient means for the privileged class to exploit the system for personal gain without giving it a second thought, and a breeding ground for hatred of the country among the underprivileged class, owing largely to unmet dreams and expectations from the system (Owede, 2018). The aforementioned remark looks to be a fair depiction of Nigeria, where the majority of the population has lost faith in the government and its elected representatives. Nigeria has evidently not established its footing as a country capable of fulfilling its people's purpose for its existence. As a result, citizenship education must focus on a deliberate reorientation of her citizens' responsibilities, privileges, and individual rights. Falade & Falade (2013) advocate changing attitudes through social mobilization and accepting and imbibing vital concepts of unity and trust to achieve national unification.

Modibbo and Abba took a more extreme stance, claiming that national integration in a multinational society like Nigeria includes eradicating national oppression and inequality, as well as removing hurdles to the creation of a viable nation-state, as detailed in Joshua (2019). In a similar spirit, Samuel (2015) asserts that successive Nigerian administrations have devised numerous citizenship advocacy campaigns as solutions to address persisting ethnic concerns and create national principles, identity, consciousness, and integration. The author lists the Jaji Declaration (1977), Ethical Revolution and the establishment of a Centre for Democratic Studies (1982-83), "War Against Indiscipline (WAI) (1984-85)," "Mass Mobilization for 18 Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) 1986-93," "War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC)" (1994-99), and "national rebirth" as examples of citizenship advocacy programs (1999-2007). Despite the fact that they were initiatives aimed at entrenching and appropriately training persons with an anticipated successful civic culture, these programs were short-lived because they ended with the

governments that began them. The obvious truth is that no single person, religious group, or ethnic group can construct a nation on their own; instead, everyone must work together. It's crucial to remember that unifying and integrating the country's diverse ethnic nationalities is a difficult task that requires the united efforts of everyone involved, regardless of caste, race, language, or religious views.

According to Ojo (2009), the growth of national viewpoint has unknowingly resulted in a tepid attitude toward nation-building among unsatisfied countries whose emotions are aroused by clandestine tribal groupings coordinating the races in the hot struggle for significance inside the polity. To build a strong, integrated, and united nation, good citizens must be aware of their roles, rights, and privileges, as well as tolerance, appreciation, a positive attitude, and love for their country, and who, at times, would put the nation's interests ahead of individual selfish and tribal interests. According to Federico, as recounted in Njoku (2015), the unity and integration of a large social system is contingent on majority groups adopting minority groups inside their neighborhoods and minority groups accepting the majority's culture. Given the preceding, one would wonder if Nigeria's majority groups are dragging the minority group along with them in the grand scheme of things. Is it safe for minority groups in Nigeria to interact with the majority? Do the dominant groups believe the Nigerian entity to include minorities? Is there a friendly relationship between the majority and the minority groups? Is there parity in the sharing of national resources between the two groups? These and other questions about national integration demand to be answered. Simply expressed, a harmonious, united, and integrated society does not discriminate against minorities in decision-making, political appointment, employment, education, or the location of developmental projects, but instead tries to form a cohesive force that leads to general national success. Njoku (2011) concurred in his submission that integration decreases ethnicity, discrimination, unfair treatment, and the non-indigene syndrome. As a result, the central theme of this paper is the importance of citizenship education, which instills and equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and understanding they need to participate actively and productively in national development as informed, critical, and dynamic citizens who are socially, culturally, and morally responsible.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

For clarity of purpose, the following concepts will be explicably conceptualized: citizenship education and national integration.

Citizenship Education

To succeed in all realms of human effort, Nigeria, as a diverse nation with diverse ethnic groups, languages, backgrounds, and religious belief systems, requires active, dynamic, united, critical, and knowledgeable individuals. As a result, citizenship education is an important subject that is rich in the underlying societal ideals required to live in an ever-changing and democratic society. So, what does it mean to be a citizen? A citizen is someone who is a member of a country, such as Nigeria, and who is entitled to all of Nigeria's advantages and rights as specified in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Responsible citizenship, which is a prerequisite for long-term national cohesion and growth, is the symbol of every promising society. A citizen, according to David, is a person who is recognized by custom and law as a legitimate member of a sovereign or part of a nation, as cited by Unimna and Akim (2018). As a result, Edinyang and Yusuf (2021) defined citizenship as a state member with social and political rights. A citizen is also someone who lives inside a country's geographical borders and swears allegiance to the government, as well as someone who has full access to all of the government's advantages. According to Vattal, as described in Edinyang and Yusuf (2021), citizens are "members of a civil society who are related to it by certain obligations, subject to its authority, and equal receivers in its benefits". As a citizen of a country like Nigeria, you have the power to use all of your political, social, and moral rights while also being bound by the state's rules, regulations, and laws. Let's look at the definition of the term "citizenship education" with that in mind. Citizenship education is the type of education that teaches, molds, and equips people with the knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills they need to be active, informed, and responsible members of a democratic society, as the term suggests. As a result, citizenship education as an educational process is concerned with the practical application of knowledge and skills that support an individual's full participation in his community in order to live a democratic life (Gimba, 2016).

Furthermore, citizenship education, according to Fan (2014), increases people's grasp of their fundamental human rights, improves political literacy, teaches social values, and exposes students to government functions, all of which contribute to national integration. The purpose of citizenship education is to develop active citizens who are socially responsible, socially sensitive, socially adaptable, and socially knowledgeable members of their communities and society. Citizenship education is a tool for empowering individuals and groups to fight for societal transformation, such as social justice, progressive citizenship, and cosmopolitanism, critical analysis, political engagement, and cross-cultural respect and understanding, according to Gimba, Essien, and Gimba (2019). Gimba (2016) concluded that citizenship education is intended to develop inter-ethnic understanding among Nigeria's ethnic divide in order to instill in people the power and beauty of diversity, which can contribute to nation-building, in an attempt to clarify the importance of citizenship education. Citizenship education, according to Nwaji (2011), is a tool that may be utilized to teach Nigerians the values of responsible citizenship and how to act in a way that supports national cohesion and progress. Citizenship education is also defined as the deliberate act of teaching specific information, values, habits, abilities, and attitudes that the community considers valuable and acceptable for the group's survival and advancement.

In a similar vein, Gimba and Gimba (2012) define citizenship education as "the systematic process by which young people acquire or internalize the values, sentiments, and norms of the society in which they live and actively

participate to ensure that the common good of the citizens of the society is catered for, including resisting anti-social and unguided youthful exuberance." The purpose of citizenship education, according to Kerr (1999), is to create well-rounded, responsible citizens who are aware of their legal rights and obligations and can use that knowledge to evaluate government policies and actions. Citizenship education, as defined by Anumba (2013), comprises socializing youths against all sorts of antisocial conduct and imparting qualities such as respect, labor dignity, and other positive characteristics that help to the building of a strong, self-sustaining, and dependable nation. On the other side, citizenship education as a course of study aids in the socialization, liberation, and transformation of an individual learner for functional responsibilities in a democratic and dynamic society. According to Moorse (2012), citizenship education is a set of educational practices and activities aimed at better enabling persons (both young and elderly) to participate actively in democratic life by assuming and exercising their rights and responsibilities in society. It only takes a little practice to learn how to cohabit as a single, indivisible society.

Citizenship education has thus evolved to comprehend more than just the teaching of facts about the political structure and operations, as well as the memorization of government bureaucrats' names. It entails the promotion of good citizenship in its broadest definition (Adie, Dan-Asabe and Ohanyere, 2022). In a nutshell, it focuses on students' social, cultural, and political development, including helping them see themselves as members of society, developing their understanding of democracy, diversity, social justice, fairness, rights and responsibilities, and learning to positively contribute to their communities and democratic and public life (Moorse, 2012). In theory, citizenship education assists in the development of citizens who are socially, culturally, and politically active in carrying out their tasks and obligations for the benefit of all members of society, free of prejudice and rancor. Citizenship education generates law-abiding, conscientious citizens, according to Edinyang, Unimke, Ubi, Opoh, and Iwok (2017), who not only comprehend their rights and obligations, but also analyze how those rights relate with the rights of others.

Citizenship Education's Objectives

Citizenship education strives to encourage self-reliance, national consciousness, socio-political engagement, and civil duty, critical and active citizenship in a progressive and successful society. It helps the youngster develop self-discipline, hard work, teamwork, and respect for constituted authority. As indicated by Bozimo and Ikwumelu in Gimba, Essien, and Gimba, it can improve national consciousness in terms of lingual/cultural diversity and national unity (2019). Citizenship education, as a result, aims to instill in young citizens the concepts of unity in diversity, patriotism, ethnic interdependence, and individual and ethnic group equality, so that they grow up to be adults who are fully aware of the diverse cultural heritages and patterns that make up the entity known as Nigeria. Mezieobi (2015) argues that civic education should contain, but not be limited to, the following:

- To comprehend the entire spectrum of what citizenship involves.
- To understand that citizenship is a two-way street centered on the state and its official entities, but that citizens also have a role to play.
- To comprehend the roles of each of the legal citizenship partners (citizens and the state).
- Recognize that meaningful citizenship requires both the citizen and the government to work together.
- To fully appreciate the legal symbolic link that exists between the citizen and the state.
- To implant citizenship ideas in students, pupils, and other individuals' thoughts.
- Assisting citizens in understanding their place in Nigerian society.
- To get citizens of a country ready for global community interaction.

Nigeria's Citizenship Education Challenges

Nigeria is known for its multi-religious, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-lingual ethnic and linguistic groups. These discrepancies make it difficult for Nigerians to live in peace and harmony because they encourage tribalism, nepotism, ethnic prejudice, and religious prejudice, all of which are counterproductive to the purposes of citizenship education in Nigeria. Citizenship education in Nigeria is to create and produce critical, effective, and responsible citizens who would vow their complete loyalty to the country by carrying out their duties and obligations as defined by the country's governing laws. However, since social vices have become more common in Nigeria in recent years, the opposite is true. The following are the issues of citizenship education in Nigeria, according to Unimna and Akim (2018):

1. Civil disobedience: When civilians defy established authorities, this is known as civil disobedience. When citizens believe they have been misled, oppressed, or have had their rights infringed by leaders or the government, this occurs.
2. Religion: Religious differences are causing citizens to become intolerant of one another. This issue has resulted in discrimination, killings, a lack of trust, and a lack of peace.
3. Ethnicity and culture: Culture describes a person's beliefs, attitudes, customs, values, and abilities, which are all utilized to identify them. Nigerians do not see themselves as one unit, which leads to disintegration, tribalism, and fragmentation. After all, they're not from the same tribe or ethnic group.
4. Insecurity: Insecurity poses a threat to peace, unity, and peaceful cohabitation, which is in direct opposition to one of citizenship education's goals of "Unity." Nigerians are immensely fearful of their own country.
5. A teacher's role: A teacher communicates, instills, or instructs students. A teacher who does not have a thorough understanding of the subject (citizenship education) will be unable to develop in students the necessary mindset for effective citizenship.

National Integration

Before digging more into the concept of national integration, let's define the term "nation." A nation is a country or state that has a unified political, social, and cultural structure. A nation can also refer to a collection of people who feel a feeling of shared history, culture, interests, and values. Above all, it is a sense of belonging (oneness) that unites people of many nationalities and cultures to form a nation. It is a collection of people who share a same ancestry, language, history, culture, and governance, according to Asira (2017). They are frequently self-conscious and mindful of their environment. "A designated human population sharing a historic geography, common mythologies and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy, and common legal rights and duties for all members," Smith (1991) defines a nation. Nigeria, as a pluralistic nation, is a land populated by individuals of numerous ethnic groups living in different locations, speaking different languages, practicing different religions, and leading different lifestyles. Over the years, nepotism, tribalism, religious prejudice, corruption, insecurity, and conflicts of interest have fractured the country along ethnic lines, making it practically impossible to construct a powerful, progressive, and cohesive society. Nigeria is currently at war, with widespread secessionist agitation in the South East, South West, and even the Middle Belt; Boko Haram terrorism and banditry in the core North; farmers/herders crises occurring on a daily basis in almost every part of the country; and kidnapping and killing of innocent citizens as well as traditional rulers occurring in almost every part of the country. All of these occurrences have cast severe doubt on the unity and identity of the Nigerian entity. According to Grotenhuis (2016), there are four important foundations for legitimacy for a genuine relationship to exist between the nation and its people:

- (a) People's sovereignty in exercising political power;
- (b) People's equal rights before the law;
- (c) People's required solidarity for mutual assistance; and
- (d) People's community, bonded by a common destiny and shared culture.

All of the above are woefully lacking in Nigeria's efforts to build a progressive, cohesive, and purpose-driven nation, since all of the country's tribes live in fear of one another due to a lack of proper orientation. It is reasonable to conclude that active conformation of one's sense of belonging and togetherness with one's fellow citizens, as well as among different ethnic groups, is required to build the relationship between citizens and citizens and the nation, which serves as a solid foundation for national integration and development. In order to accomplish national integration, what duties does a nation have to its citizens? According to Grotenhuis (2016), the relationship between the nation and its citizens serves five fundamental functions:

1. Providing a forum for citizens to participate in political decision-making, ensuring that the political system is inclusive and accessible to everyone;
2. Providing citizens with protection from external and internal aggressors as well as criminals;
3. Ensuring that all people are treated equally, fairly, and without prejudice;
4. Providing basic social services that enable individuals to live decent lives;
5. Creating infrastructure to encourage economic activity and establishing criteria to ensure that economic activity is equitable.

If the Nigerian government performed all of these functions, it would usher in a progressive, united, prosperous, and integrated society in which all citizens, regardless of caste, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, economic status, culture, or language, can feel a sense of belonging and oneness, without which our efforts to build the Nigeria of our dreams would be a mirage. In light of the preceding discussion, what exactly is "national integration"? The process of developing a sense of common identity among a country's population is known as national integration. It does, however, mean that they all recognize that they are one, despite belonging to different communities, castes, beliefs, cultures, and geographies and speaking different languages. This kind of collaboration is essential for the growth of a strong, united, and affluent nation. National integration, in a broader sense, comprises "creating a mentality that encourages citizens to choose country loyalty over group allegiance, and national wellbeing above narrow tribal interests." Orjinta and Ameh (2020) cited Philip and Tenue's definition of integration as "a state of mind or disposition to be cohesive, to work together, to be devoted to mutual programs" among persons inside the same political body. According to the aforementioned definition, Nigerians lack mutual interaction, and as a result, there is a lack of common commitment to the aim of constructing a united and indivisible nation. Nigerians, as we all know, come from a wide range of communities and castes, live in various geographical regions and speak numerous languages, believe in and practice multiple religions, and lead unique lives. One may convincingly say that inter-marital integration has occurred, but what I'm aiming for is something far deeper: emotional integration of Nigerians, so that the two can be fused into one powerful united national integration while maintaining our ideal variety.

Any country with a diverse sociocultural, religious, linguistic, and geographic landscape must integrate. And in a country like ours, it is sorely needed. Nwaji (2011) defined integration as a state of an organism or substance in which it interacts with its surroundings in a continuous psychological, physical, emotional, and mental manner. According to the author, integration implies a state of fusion or harmonic connection of the values and roles of individuals and groups inside and among the groupings that make up a community, resulting in an identifiable single entity with similar attributes, aims, purposes, and objectives. National integration, according to Onyibor, is defined as the formation of a unified and cohesive national identity and awareness in a varied society in which all individuals are given a fair chance to attain their full potential, as noted in Akinyetun (2020).

According to Adejoh (2005), national integration is the process of bringing together various cultural and social groups into a single territorial unit and forging national unity. The efforts of successive Nigerian governments to build

a country with a "genuine national identity" have yielded little or no good results because the process lacks any sense of honesty and decency. Usman (1999) says that Nigerian national integration has entirely failed to bring about nation-building, particularly in the post-colonial setting, and that the process is under siege. Joshua (2019) also noted that marginalizing and oppressing some segments of the country or ethnic groups in the country's political and economic life is a violation of the national integration goal, which must be rejected. A united country and people, according to Edosa (2014), are better able to address development, nationhood, and stability challenges. As a varied society, we must cohabit peacefully and cordially while respecting the culture and religion of our fellow Nigerians. This can only be accomplished through citizenship education, which aims to develop great patriots as citizens of our beloved country. Imhonopi and Urim (2012) believe that federalism as it is currently practiced in Nigeria has failed to ensure both national integration and local rule. Nigeria's only hope is for citizenship education to re-orient her citizens, who have lost faith in the government (Owede, 2018).

Benefits of Nigerian National Integration

The following are some of the ways that unifying and integrating the country will benefit the country:

- It will help to foster national unity and collaboration in the face of national development challenges;
- In the face of national tragedies and disasters, it will promote unity and peace;
- It will also build a coordinated strategy for dealing with the country's external threats.
- Attitudes, beliefs, and a positive cultural ethos that benefit the country;
- It will aid residents in creating interconnected aims and desires that will help the country grow and prosper;
- It will help citizens develop a sense of commitment to national ideas;
- Improving the nation's ability to work together by increasing the capacity and capability of its citizens.
- Improving the economic success and well-being of Nigerians;
- It will help in promoting equitable distribution of government resources;
- It also helps to build a strong and long-lasting Nigerian identity that weaves all of Nigeria's diversity into a strong national fabric.

Dimensions of Nigeria's National Integration

Numerous facets of national integration contribute to the formation of a strong and united country that strives to create opportunities for national growth. Here are a few examples:

1. A strong communication strategy: This entails, among other things, partnering with local media to combat hate speech, fake news, and other destructive behaviors that undermine the country's unity and integration.
2. Visionary democratic leadership: Visionary democratic leadership is dedicated to effective administration and the formation of a clear national vision. This also comprises community empowerment through citizen participation and engagement for improved results.
3. Economic unity: This entails dividing resources wisely and equally among Nigeria's diverse ethnic groups in order to create collaboration.
4. Preventing issues before they arise: Prompt response to crises avoids a plethora of bad repercussions, which may be achieved with the support of a community intelligence monitoring system.
5. Cultural assimilation: In a society with multiple subcultures, such as faiths and ethnic groups, culture describes people's ways of life, such as their conventions, values, hobbies, and belief system, and it acts as a framework.
6. A more effective educational system: Education is the facilitation of learning as well as the development of skills, attitudes, values, and information with the declared objective of changing a learner's behavior. Instilling in citizens the necessary information, attitudes, values, and skills for national integration will require a significant improvement in Nigeria's educational system.

Major Actors Helping to Promote National Integration

A country that aspires to be a united, strong, and integrated nation must work to create an enabling environment that brings together the key players responsible for charting a path toward national integration while also contributing positively to society's development. These key players working to promote national integration include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The government: The government provides visionary leadership by mainstreaming national integration in national policy and adopting a unified approach to national healing, integration, and growth through the executive branch.
- Youth: Young people are widely recognized as vital assets for national growth and social improvement. In order to build a strong and united country, youths must be motivated, inspired, mentored, and empowered to participate at all levels in the country's cultural, political, social, and economic development, as well as the fight against societal ills like negative ethnicity, nepotism, tribalism, and violence.
- Women's organizations: Women's involvement in integration acts as a catalyst for societal improvement. The vitality, novelty, personality, and orientation of a country determine its rate of development.
- Media: Through responsible reporting, which includes highlighting positive trends and developments, ensuring fair and balanced reporting, and emphasizing national issues over factional issues like ethnic politics, the electronic and print media play a critical role in promoting national integration.
- Political leaders: Strong leadership and commitment are required for national integration. A positive focus point for community integration and growth will be visionary leadership that embraces the principle of unity in diversity.

- Faith-based organizations: Faith-based organizations play an important role in peacebuilding by helping to resolve conflicts, build peace, and build capacity for peace and reconciliation efforts.
- Schools and colleges: Schools and colleges provide the necessary platform for increasing diversity awareness, reducing tribalism, facilitating attitude change, and promoting love for one's fellow citizens, devotion, and patriotism towards the nation.

The Major Obstacles to Nigeria's National Integration

Concerns about severe intolerance, distrust, ethnicity, corruption, and, most dangerously, insecurity, which looks to be a powerful force opposing national integration and unity in large amounts, represent a threat to national integration as a national interest and objective in Nigeria (Onyeakazi and Okoroafor, 2019). Regardless, the following are the major roadblocks that Nigeria must overcome in order to achieve national integration.

The absence of the rule of law is one of the major roadblocks to Nigerian national integration, as evidenced by governments' disregard for the Nigerian constitution, a rapid increase in extrajudicial killings, character assassination by the powerful, daily violations of citizens' fundamental human rights, and many other things that undermine the proper devotion to the rule of law. "The widespread violation of the constitution and the instrument of rule of law portends huge risk to Nigeria's formation in the twenty-first century," writes Onosode (2013). Which has led to the following:

Insecurity: The Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria's north-east, rising rates of armed robbery, kidnappings, and banditry, farmers/herders clashes, high rates of religious intolerance, and the hate speech dichotomy all pose serious threats to the country's unity. In a similar vein, Udeh, Okoroafor, and Ihezue (2013) stated succinctly that insecurity is a barrier to the formation of strong national integration, which can help the country achieve significant developmental goals.

Nepotism: This is the practice of favoring one's relatives, religious group, or ethnic group above other ethnic and religious groupings, as evidenced in Nigerian government political appointments, armed forces recruiting, resource distribution, and project siting. According to Okoroafor et al (2016), the current status quo is anti-national unity because it fosters national division, divisiveness, and fear, all of which impede national integration.

Corruption: Corruption has become inextricably woven into the fabric of Nigerian citizens' lives, posing a serious threat to the development of a strong and united society. Police, civil defense, and army officers extort money from citizens with ease, students pay money for grades, citizens pay money to secure employment, contractors pay money to secure contracts, and politicians embezzle public funds placed in their care with impunity. Due to their insincerity and daredevil exploits in various parts of the world, Nigerians, according to Obialor (2016), are among the world's most corrupt and dishonest people.

Poverty: As the cost of living rises and the means of subsistence dwindle on a daily basis as a result of the government's unfavorable economic policies and failure to chart a course for rapid economic growth and development, poverty has become a social phenomenon afflicting the majority of Nigerian citizens. According to Johnson (2016), poverty is the root of all problems and destabilizes individuals and institutions to the point that only its reduction or elimination may provide solace and hope.

Religious intolerance: Religious fanatics who believe their religion is superior to other people's beliefs produce fanaticism, fear of dominance, lack of accommodation, and a sense of belonging among many ethnic groups.

Before recognizing themselves as Nigerians, most Nigerians see themselves as Hausa/Fulani, Esan, Tiv, Yoruba, or Igbo, depending on their ethnicity. This is a contributing aspect in the country's inter-tribal fighting. Nigeria will never be united if its citizens remain suspicious of one another. People should accept their differences as part of the richness of diversity rather than hate one another because of them (Athanasius, 2019).

The Role of Citizenship Education in Nigerian National Integration

In terms of protecting Nigerians' lives and sustaining peace and stability within the country, the importance of citizenship education in building national awareness and integration in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. The premise is that citizenship education is necessary for overall development, enlightenment, social and political revolution, and so forth. In any event, Athanasius (2019) highlights the significance of citizenship education in developing a progressive and integrated society:

1. Citizenship education instills crucial attitudes and actions for people's well-being and society stability.
2. Citizenship education encourages people to see beyond their own interests and see the bigger picture of national peace, encouraging tolerance and national cohesion.
3. Citizenship education creates a love for one's homeland, which leads to effective citizenship and patriotism, which are both essential for a united and integrated country.
4. Citizenship education can foster an understanding of the cultures and traditions of various ethnic groups, resulting in mutual respect and admiration.
5. Citizenship education would assist citizens comprehend their rights, which are enshrined in Chapters II and IV of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended.

Conclusion

According to the conclusions of this study, reaching our dream of a united, dynamic, and integrated Nigeria will require a coordinated effort by all ethnic groups to discover solutions to national integration challenges. This must be accomplished through the application of citizenship education, which is rich in important social ideals and concepts. The paper convincingly argues that all Nigerian citizens, both youth and adults, should passionately imbibe and inculcate a truth-based lifestyle, be honest in their dealings with one another, and tolerate one another in order to foster a conducive environment and cooperation among individuals, ethnic groups, and institutions, resulting in effective national integration in the country. True integration would be ushered in by a sincere and intentional commitment among Nigeria's numerous peoples to truthful living and peaceful co-existence, ushering in a progressive nation working toward long-term development for the sake of current and future generations.

Recommendations

1. Citizenship education should be taught by instructors who have the required teaching experience and qualifications in the teaching and learning of the subject matter in order to have a positive impact on students.
2. The government should make every effort to arrange and carry out training and retraining of citizenship education teachers in order to promote efficiency.
3. Citizenship education Teachers should make self-improvement and professional development programs, seminars, and conferences a top priority.
4. All Nigeria citizens should endeavour to imbibe the culture of accommodating and working with others in a manner that promote national integration and unity.

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