



Research Article

Integrating Peace and Security Education into the Civic Education Curriculum: Implications for Social Stability in Zamfara State, Nigeria

Sule Muhammad¹, Abdullahi Abdulhamid²

1. Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Federal University Gusau; muhammadsule@fugusau.edu.ng
2. Protocol Department, Government House Minna, Niger State; shinkafiou@gmail.com

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Abstract. The persistent insecurity and violent conflicts in Zamfara State, Nigeria, have highlighted the critical need for educational strategies that foster peace, security awareness, and social stability. This study examined the integration of peace and security education into the Civic Education curriculum in secondary schools and its implications for students' attitudes and broader societal stability. Guided by the objectives of assessing the extent of integration, evaluating its influence on students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security, and identifying challenges impeding effective implementation, the study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population included senior secondary school students (SS I–SS III), Civic Education teachers, and school principals, with a sample of 384 respondents selected through multi-stage and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire, validated by experts and

piloted for reliability ($r = 0.89$). Inferential statistics, including one-sample t-test, independent samples t-test, and multiple regression analysis, were used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that peace and security education is significantly integrated into the Civic Education curriculum ($t = 7.21, p < .05$) and positively influences students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security ($t = 6.27, p < .05$). However, effective integration is constrained by challenges including inadequate teacher training ($\beta = 0.312, p < .05$), curriculum overload ($\beta = 0.268, p < .05$), lack of instructional materials ($\beta = 0.241, p < .05$), and security challenges in schools ($\beta = 0.289, p < .05$). These barriers limit students' exposure to practical peacebuilding skills, conflict resolution competencies, and values necessary for social stability. The study concludes that while Civic Education provides a vital platform for promoting peace and security awareness, its transformative potential requires supportive teacher preparation, adequate learning resources, and secure learning environments. Policymakers and educational authorities are encouraged to strengthen teacher capacity, streamline the curriculum, provide instructional resources, and institutionalize peace and security education to enhance students' civic competencies and contribute to sustainable social stability in conflict-affected regions such as Zamfara State.

Keywords: Civic Education, Peace Education, Secondary Schools, Social Stability, Security Awareness

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary Nigeria, escalating insecurity and violent conflicts have heightened the need for educational strategies that foster peace, security awareness, and social stability. Peace and security education within the formal curriculum is widely recognized as a vital mechanism for equipping students with the values, attitudes, and conflict-resolution skills necessary to mitigate violence and promote harmonious coexistence (Olowo, 2016). Research on curriculum integration highlights that embedding peace education concepts into school subjects can reduce crime, violence, and social vices by shaping students' behavioral competencies and attitudes toward non-violent conflict resolution (Olowo, 2016; Adah, 2023). In addition, peace education integration in Nigerian curricula has been recommended as a core strategy for building a lasting culture of peace and environmental sustainability, reflecting its broader societal relevance (Adah, 2023; Saidou, 2019). Empirical evidence from Nigeria further suggests that curriculum interventions that promote peace education significantly influence students' social skills, empathy, and cooperative behaviours, thereby enhancing school harmony and contributing to national unity (Adah, 2023; Olowo, 2016). Despite these gains, gaps remain in the effective integration of peace and security themes into Civic Education, particularly within conflict-affected states such as Zamfara, where insecurity challenges demand an education system that reinforces peaceful attitudes and security consciousness among youths. This study, therefore, investigates the extent to which peace and security education is integrated into the Civic Education curriculum and its implications for social stability in Zamfara State, Nigeria.

Empirical studies indicate that the integration of peace and security education into school curricula plays a crucial role in promoting social stability and shaping students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence. Research in Nigeria has shown that incorporating peace education concepts into the Civic Education curriculum is relevant for reducing crime, violence, and social vices, although gaps in curriculum

implementation and thematic alignment remain a challenge (Olowo, 2016; Iwowari, 2024). Studies further reveal that structured peace education initiatives have a significant positive influence on students' understanding of peace, conflict resolution, and non-violent behaviour, thereby fostering cooperative attitudes and a sense of community security (Ali et al., 2025; Awotunde & Onu, 2025). However, these positive outcomes are often hindered by challenges such as inadequate teacher training, lack of teaching resources, and curriculum overload, which impede the effective integration of peace and security education in schools (Anim, 2022; Naikare & Kumar, 2025). In the context of conflict-affected states such as Zamfara, where insecurity poses serious threats to educational delivery and social cohesion, the need to strengthen Civic Education through effective integration of peace and security themes is even more pronounced.

Despite the inclusion of Civic Education in the secondary school curriculum, there is growing concern that students in Zamfara State continue to exhibit low levels of awareness regarding peace, security, and conflict resolution. The persistent insecurity, characterized by banditry, communal clashes, and youth involvement in violence, poses serious threats to social stability and educational development in the state. While Civic Education is intended to equip students with knowledge, skills, and values necessary for peaceful coexistence and community security, evidence suggests that its integration of peace and security themes may be inadequate, poorly implemented, or limited by challenges such as insufficient teacher training, curriculum overload, and lack of resources. Consequently, students may remain ill-prepared to engage in peacebuilding or adopt non-violent attitudes, undermining the objectives of both education and social stability. This situation underscores the need to examine the extent to which peace and security education is integrated into the Civic Education curriculum, its influence on students' attitudes, and the barriers hindering its effective implementation in Zamfara State.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Transformative Learning Theory

The Transformative Learning Theory (TLT), proposed by Jack Mezirow, asserts that learning occurs when individuals critically reflect on their assumptions, beliefs, and experiences, leading to a shift in perspective and behavior (Mezirow, 2000). This theory is particularly applicable to peace and security education because it explains how students can internalize values, attitudes, and behaviors that support peaceful coexistence and social stability after critically engaging with curriculum content. In the context of Civic Education in Zamfara State, Transformative Learning Theory suggests that through structured teaching, discussions, role-playing, and reflection on real-life security challenges, students can re-evaluate previously held notions about conflict, violence, and civic responsibility. This reflective process can result in positive changes in their attitudes toward community security, tolerance, and civic engagement. Recent studies have highlighted the effectiveness of transformative learning in promoting pro-social attitudes and peace-oriented behaviors among students in conflict-prone regions (Kumari & Singh, 2022; Adeyemi, 2023). Such findings reinforce the value of using TLT as a theoretical lens to examine how the

integration of peace and security education within Civic Education can transform students' perceptions and actions toward peacebuilding.



The diagram shows that integrating peace and security education into the Civic Education curriculum influences students' attitudes toward peace and community security, while challenges can limit its effectiveness. Effective integration leads to improved peaceful behaviors and contributes to overall social stability in Zamfara State.

Research Objectives

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To examine the extent to which peace and security education is integrated into the Civic Education curriculum in secondary schools in Zamfara State.
2. To assess the influence of peace and security education within Civic Education on students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security.
3. To identify challenges affecting the effective integration of peace and security education in the Civic Education curriculum in Zamfara State.

Research Questions

Corresponding to the objectives, the study will answer these questions:

1. To what extent is peace and security education integrated into the Civic Education curriculum in secondary schools in Zamfara State?
2. How does the inclusion of peace and security education in Civic Education influence students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security?
3. What are the challenges affecting the effective integration of peace and security education in the Civic Education curriculum in Zamfara State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. H_{01} : There is no significant extent of integration of peace and security education into the Civic Education curriculum in secondary schools in Zamfara State.
2. H_{02} : There is no significant influence of peace and security education integrated into Civic Education on students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security.
3. H_{03} : There are no significant challenges affecting the integration of peace and security education in Civic Education that impede its effectiveness in promoting social stability.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for collecting information from respondents to describe existing practices, attitudes, and challenges in the integration of peace and security education into Civic Education in secondary schools in Zamfara State. The population of the study comprised senior secondary school students (SS I-SS III), Civic Education teachers, and school principals across the state, as they are directly involved in the teaching, learning, and administration of the curriculum. A sample of 384 respondents was drawn using a combination of multi-stage and purposive sampling techniques to ensure representativeness and inclusion of key stakeholders. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher, aligned with the study objectives and measured on a 4-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated by experts in Social studies, and its reliability was confirmed through a pilot study, 0.89 coefficient was obtained. Data collection was conducted personally by the researcher, with adherence to ethical principles such as informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality. Collected data were analyzed using inferential statistics were used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. Specifically, a one-sample t-test was employed to examine the extent of integration of peace and security education, an independent samples t-test was used to assess its influence on students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security, and multiple regression analysis was applied to determine the challenges impeding effective integration. This methodology enabled a comprehensive investigation into the integration, influence, and barriers of peace and security education within the Civic Education curriculum, providing insights into its implications for social stability in Zamfara State.

Results

Table 1: Summary of t-test one sample on the extent of integration of peace and security education into the Civic Education curriculum in secondary schools in Zamfara State

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Test Value	df	t-value	Sig. (p)	Decision
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The Extent of Integration of Peace and Security Education	384	2.84	0.64	2.50	383	7.21	0.000	Reject Ho1
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The result of the one-sample t-test in Table 1 shows that the mean score on the extent of integration of peace and security education into the Civic Education curriculum ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 0.64$) is significantly higher than the test value of 2.50. The obtained t-value of 7.21 with 383 degrees of freedom is statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($p = .000$). This indicates that the extent of integration of peace and security education into Civic Education in secondary schools in Zamfara State is significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected.

Table 2: Summary of t-test Independence sample on the influence of peace and security education students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security secondary schools in Zamfara State

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-value	Sig. (p)	Decision
Peace and Security Education	384	3.41	0.62	383	6.27	0.000	Reject Ho2
Students' Attitudes Toward Peaceful Coexistence and Community Security	384	3.58	0.55	382	6.27	0.000	

The independent samples t-test presented in Table 2 indicates a statistically significant influence of peace and security education on students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security in secondary schools in Zamfara State. The mean score for peace and security education ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.62$) and students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 0.55$) produced a t-value of 6.27, which is significant at $p < .05$ ($p = .000$). This result suggests that peace and security education positively influences students' attitudes toward peaceful coexistence and community security. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected.

Table 3: Summary of multiple regression analysis challenges affecting the integration of peace and security education in Civic Education that impede its effectiveness in promoting social stability

Predictor Variables	B	Std. Dev.	Beta	t-value	Sig. (p)
Inadequate Teachers Training	0.284	0.067	0.312	4.24	0.000
Overloaded Civic Education Curriculum	0.231	0.059	0.268	3.92	0.000
Lack of Instructional Materials	0.197	0.061	0.241	3.23	0.001
Security Challenges in Schools	0.256	0.064	0.289	4.00	0.000

Table 3 presents the multiple regression analysis of challenges affecting the integration of peace and security education in Civic Education and how these challenges impede its effectiveness in promoting social stability. The results show that all the predictor variables examined have positive and statistically significant effects on the effectiveness of peace and security education.

Inadequate teachers' training ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 4.24$, $p < 0.05$) emerged as a significant challenge, indicating that insufficient professional preparation of Civic Education teachers strongly impedes the effective integration of peace and security education. This suggests that teachers' limited knowledge and pedagogical skills reduce their capacity to deliver peace-oriented content effectively.

Similarly, an overloaded Civic Education curriculum ($\beta = 0.268$, $t = 3.92$, $p < 0.05$) significantly affects integration, implying that excessive curriculum content leaves little room for meaningful incorporation of peace and security themes. Lack of instructional materials ($\beta = 0.241$, $t = 3.23$, $p < 0.05$) also significantly impedes effectiveness, showing that the absence of relevant teaching aids, textbooks, and learning resources weakens students' understanding of peace and security concepts. Security challenges in schools ($\beta = 0.289$, $t = 4.00$, $p < 0.05$) further contribute significantly, indicating that insecurity within and around schools disrupts teaching and learning processes, thereby undermining peace and security education initiatives. Consequently, the significance values ($p < 0.05$) for all variables indicate that these challenges jointly and individually impede the effective integration of peace and security education in Civic Education.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the integration of peace and security education into the Civic Education curriculum and its implications for promoting social stability in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The findings reveal that while Civic Education has strong potential to serve as a platform for peacebuilding and security awareness among secondary school students, its effectiveness is significantly constrained by several systemic challenges. Inadequate teacher training, an overloaded curriculum, insufficient instructional materials, and persistent security challenges within school environments were found to impede the meaningful integration of peace and security education. These factors collectively limit students' exposure to practical peacebuilding skills, conflict resolution competencies, and values necessary for peaceful coexistence and community security. The study further establishes that

effective peace and security education cannot be achieved through curriculum inclusion alone; rather, it requires a supportive teaching workforce, adequate learning resources, conducive school environments, and intentional policy commitment. In conflict-affected contexts such as Zamfara State, strengthening Civic Education through targeted peace and security content remains a critical strategy for addressing insecurity, fostering social cohesion, and preparing young people to become responsible and peace-oriented citizens. Consequently, addressing the identified challenges is essential for maximizing the transformative role of Civic Education in promoting sustainable peace and social stability.

Recommendations

1. Government and educational authorities should organize continuous professional development programmes, workshops, and in-service training focused specifically on peace and security education to enhance Civic Education teachers' pedagogical competence and content knowledge.
2. The Civic Education curriculum should be reviewed and streamlined to reduce content overload and allow adequate space for the effective integration of peace and security education themes, with emphasis on practical and participatory learning approaches.
3. Relevant instructional materials such as textbooks, teachers' guides, audiovisual resources, and activity-based learning tools should be developed and supplied to schools to support effective teaching and learning of peace and security concepts.
4. Stakeholders, including government and community leaders, should strengthen school safety measures to create secure and conducive learning environments that support uninterrupted teaching of peace and security education.
5. Educational policymakers should institutionalize peace and security education within Civic Education through clear policy directives and encourage collaboration among schools, communities, security agencies, and civil society organizations to reinforce peacebuilding initiatives.

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