

Pre-Service Social Studies Teachers' Knowledge Of Democratic Values And Political Participation In Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study determined the pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation; and examined the relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study utilised a descriptive design of the correlational type. The study population consisted of all pre-service Social Studies teachers in Oyo State, Nigeria. The sample for the study consisted of 300 pre-service Social Studies teachers in three selected tertiary institution in Oyo State. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted. Three government-owned tertiary institutions were selected in Oyo State using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 200 level students. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 pre-service teachers in each of the three selected schools, totaling 300 pre-service teachers that were used in this study. One researcher-designed and expert-validated instrument titled 'Pre-service Social Studies Teachers' Knowledge of Democratic Values and Political Participation Questionnaire' (PSSTKDVPPQ) was used for the study. Data collected were analysed using frequency, percentages, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation at the 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation was high at 61.7%. There was a significant relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers knowledge and democratic value and political participation in Oyo State ($r = 0.791$; $P < 0.05$). The study concluded that the Social Studies helps in promoting democratic values and enhancing political participation among pre-service Social Studies teacher in Oyo State.*

Keywords: Democratic values, Pre-service teachers, Knowledge, Social Studies, Political participation

Introduction

Democracy is a system of governance which guarantees representative government, power to the people, fundamental rights, participatory engagement, checks and balances, impartial administration, and equality. The presence of democracy in a given state can be measured by the state's practice of democratic values, the fundamental beliefs and constitutional principles that guide the practices of a democratic government, such as justice and equality, freedom and liberty, separation of powers, rule of law, and respect for human rights. Regrettably, Adetoro and Omiyefa (2014) submitted that in Nigeria and throughout Africa, people are usually imperiled to physical and psychological torture. The cases of unintentional gunshot wounds, spousal abuse, solitary confinement without charge or trial, and abuse by law enforcement officials are frequent incidents. In short, the experience in Nigeria has demonstrated the extent to which integrity and dignity of people are not valued and upheld in society (Adetoro & Omiyefa, 2014).

Democratic value refers to the principles and ideals that underpin a democratic society. It encompasses concepts such as equality, freedom, justice, and the safe-guarding of each person's rights. These values emphasise the importance of citizen involvement, the rule of law and accountability in shaping a fair and inclusive society. Despite the implementation of democratic values through school subjects such as Social Studies and government, democratic problems (such as human rights violations, electoral violence and malpractice, suppression of freedom of speech, ethnic discord, kidnapping or murdering political rivals and penning or funding the dissemination of negative media stories) are rife in Nigeria (Obiagu *et al.*, 2019).

Political Participation is a comprehensive and insightful analysis of the country's political landscape. Political participation is a complex and dynamic process that is essential in forming a country's democracy (Al-Odat, Al-Qora'n, & Hamoud, 2023). According to Al-Odat, *et al.*, (2023), with more than 200 million residents, Nigeria has witnessed various forms of political engagement, such include casting a ballot, becoming a member of a political party and attending protests and demonstrations. Oyewole, Hassan, and Abdullahi (2023) observed that challenges such as voter apathy, electoral violence, and restricted access to political information continue to hinder full and inclusive participation in the political process. Efforts are being made by civil society organisations and the government to address these issues and promote active citizen engagement for a more vibrant democracy in Nigeria (Oyewole *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, political participation in Nigeria also critically assesses the barriers that hinder effective political engagement. Issues such as voter apathy, electoral violence, and corruption, which have long plagued Nigeria's democratic processes (Ashindorbe, 2018),

Social Studies is a dynamic and problem-solving discipline that encompasses character formation, democratic involvement, and political engagements (Adetoro & Omiyefa, 2014; Omiyefa, 2021). Social Studies can have a significant influence on students' attitudes and behaviours, both in school and in wider society. In Nigeria, Social Studies can promote positive attitudes towards democratic values and encourage students to become active and engaged citizens. It can also encourage ethical decision-making and responsible behaviour among students (Obiagu, Machie & Ndubuisi, 2023). The curriculum for Social Studies in Nigeria has undergone several revisions and updates over the years. The current curriculum is the 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum, which was introduced in 2013. This curriculum emphasises the significance of expanding students' knowledge, skills, and values related to democratic citizenship (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019).

The effectiveness of the current Social Studies curriculum has been evaluated through various methods, including studies of student achievement, surveys of teachers and students, and analysis of curriculum materials. The results of these evaluations have been mixed, with some evidence of positive impact and some evidence of room for improvement (Akubuilu, Ugo, Ugo, Ugochukwu, & Ikehi, 2019). Based on the findings of previous research and evaluation studies, there are a number of recommendations for improving Social Studies in Nigeria. These recommendations include revising the curriculum to make it more relevant to students' needs, providing more support as well as training for teachers, and improving the quality of learning materials and resources (Tong, Uyen, & Ngan, 2022).

Improving Social Studies in Nigeria has the potential to make a major positive influence on the future of the country. Better educated citizens will be more able to take part in and contribute to the democratic process, which can lead to more effective and accountable governance. Additionally, a stronger understanding of Social Studies can promote economic development, peace, and security (Okunade & Awosusi, 2023). Social Studies teachers play a critical part in advancing democratic values and political participation among students. Recently, there have been a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the capacity of Social Studies teachers to effectively teach these concepts. These initiatives include teacher training programmes, curriculum development workshops, and the provision of teaching resources. The impact of these initiatives on student learning has been mixed, with some studies showing positive effects and others showing limited or no impact (Adebule, Kazeem, & Akuboyade, 2019).

The quality of Social Studies instruction depends on the knowledge and skills possessed by Social Studies teachers (Omiyefa, 2021). In Nigeria, there is a need to enhance the quality of teacher training, so that teachers have the necessary instructional abilities and subject-matter knowledge to teach Social Studies. This includes the use of innovative teaching methods, and the ability to foster critical thinking and democratic values among students (Okoli, & Umar, 2021).

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Teachers' knowledge is crucial for providing quality education to learners. It encompasses a wide range of subject matter expertise, pedagogical skills, and understanding of student needs. Additionally, teachers' knowledge also includes keeping abreast of recent findings and educational practices to ensure effective instruction. Pre-service teachers' knowledge encompasses a wide range of subject matter expertise, pedagogical strategies, and understanding of educational theories (Karlen, Carmen, Johannes, Rosenthal, & Tabea, 2023). This knowledge is acquired through coursework, field experiences, and professional development opportunities. It is crucial that pre-service educators possess a sound foundation of knowledge in order to effectively plan and deliver instruction, assess student learning, and create a positive classroom environment. According to Asregid, Mihiretie, and Areaya (2023), pre-service teachers' knowledge ought to be continually updated and refined as they adopt reflective practice and keep up with the most recent educational approaches.

Statement of Problem

Observations have shown that there is insufficient understanding among pre-service Social Studies educators in Oyo State, Nigeria, when it comes to teaching about democratic values and political participation, and this has led to a lack of civic engagement among students, which is a serious concern. It has also been noted that there is a lack of resources and training available to pre-service Social Studies teachers in Oyo State, Nigeria, to help them effectively teach about democratic values and political participation. A disconnect has also been discovered between the curriculum taught in teacher training programmes and the needs of pre-service teachers of Social Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria, where the curriculum fails to sufficiently address the importance of democratic values and political participation. There is little or no emphasis on civic engagement and democratic values in the Nigerian education system, where the curriculum for Social Studies teachers does not adequately address the cultural context of Nigeria, which can lead to a lack of understanding among pre-service teachers. The curriculum for Social Studies teachers in Nigeria is outdated and does

not reflect the current political and social climate in the country. Inadequate teacher training programmes that specifically address democratic values and political participation in Nigeria have also been identified as a problem.

Purpose of the Study

The ultimate objective of this study is to examine pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and political participation in Oyo State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. determine the pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation in Oyo State, Nigeria; and
- ii. examine the relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in the study area; and

Research Question

One question was answered in the study:

What is the level of knowledge of pre-service Social Studies teachers on democratic values and political participation in Oyo State, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

One null hypothesis was tested in the study:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT) as developed by Albert Bandura in 1977. It is a well-known psychology theory that highlights how crucial imitation and observation are to the process of learning. This theory holds that people learn new abilities not just via firsthand experience but also through observing and imitating the behaviours of others. It emphasizes how crucial cognitive functions like motivation, memory, and attention are in shaping human behaviour. A paradigm for learning that take into considerations the social environment, the learner's behaviour, and personal area like affect and cognition is provided by social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986, 2012).

Babavi (2012) asserts that the SCLT is possibly the most popular theory of learning and development. Its foundation is in a number of important ideas from conventional learning theory. Since it takes memory, attention, and motivation into account, this theory is commonly referred to as a link between cognitive learning theory and behaviourist learning theory, according to Muro and Jeffrey (2008). According to Gibson (2004), social learning theory (SLT) and social cognitive theory (SCT) define learning as a dynamic interplay between individuals, their surroundings, and their behaviour. To have an impact on one another, meaningful learning in a social setting requires both engagement and reification since engagement in a social context entails two stages of meaning-making (Wenger, 2010).

The Social Cognitive Learning Theory is its emphasis on observational learning. Individuals acquire new behaviours by watching and copying the acts of others, according to Bandura. This process is facilitated by the presence of role models or influential figures who exhibit certain behaviours. For example, children often learn social skills by watching and imitating their parents or peers. This theory recognizes that people are active contributor in their own learning process and that they can took up new behaviours without necessarily engaging in them firsthand.

Another significant concept within this theory is self-efficacy. Bandura proposed that individuals' beliefs about their own abilities to perform certain tasks influence their behaviour and motivation. Higher levels of self-efficacy led to improved effort and persistence in achieving goals, while lower levels may result in avoidance or reduced effort. This concept has important implications for education and personal development, as it suggests that building self-confidence and providing opportunities for success can enhance learning outcomes. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory accentuates the significance of observing and imitating others, leading to enhanced learning through modeling behaviour. This theory also highlights the function of self-regulation and motivation in the learning process, promoting a deeper understanding and application of new knowledge. By focusing on the interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental factors, this theory gives a comprehensive framework for understanding how people develop new abilities and habits. Additionally, it underscores the importance of social influences in shaping learning outcomes and personal development.

Moreover, the Social Cognitive Learning Theory acknowledges the reciprocal interaction between the environment and individuals. It emphasizes that External stimuli also have an impact on people's behaviour in addition to internal considerations and social context. For instance, a person's behaviour may be shaped by reinforcement or punishment from others or societal norms and expectations.

This perspective highlights the significance of taking into consideration both individual characteristics and environmental factors when understanding human behaviour. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory provides insightful information about how people gain knowledge through observation, imitation, cognitive processes, and social interactions. By emphasizing observational learning, self-efficacy beliefs, and the reciprocal relationship between environment and individuals, this theory gives a comprehensive outline for understanding human behaviour and learning. Its implications extend to various fields, including education, psychology, and personal development.

Literature Review

Pre-service teachers have a vital role in shaping the future of education and society. Their knowledge and understanding of democratic values and political participation are vital for fostering an informed citizenry. This literature review aims to explore the existing research on pre-service teachers' knowledge in these areas, highlighting the importance of their role in promoting democratic values. Numerous studies have examined pre-service teachers' knowledge of political participation. Siegel-Stechler (2019) revealed that many pre-service teachers lacked a comprehensive understanding of political systems, voting processes, and the importance of civic engagement. Similarly, Zhao and Zhang (2017) discovered that pre-service teachers often had limited knowledge about current political issues and lacked confidence in discussing them with their students. These results emphasize the need for instructor education programmes to prioritize the improvement of pre-service teachers' knowledge in political participation.

In addition to political participation, pre-service teachers' understanding of democratic values is equally significant. Bursa and Ersoy (2016) revealed that many pre-service teachers had a limited grasp on fundamental democratic principles such as equality, freedom of speech, and social justice. This lack of understanding can hinder their ability to effectively promote these values within their classrooms. Therefore, it is crucial for instructor education programmes to incorporate explicit instruction on democratic values to ensure that future educators can foster an inclusive and equitable learning environment.

Nganga, Roberts and James (2020) found that pre-service teachers with conservative ideologies were more likely to avoid controversial topics or present biased perspectives in their lessons. Conversely, those with liberal ideologies tended to encourage open discussions but sometimes struggled with maintaining respectful dialogue among students with differing views. These findings highlight the importance of addressing biases and promoting impartiality within teacher education programmes to ensure all students receive a balanced education on democratic values and political participation.

Pre-service teachers' knowledge in democratic values and political participation is crucial for fostering an informed citizenry and promoting a democratic society. Existing research indicates that many pre-service teachers lack comprehensive understanding in these areas, which can hinder their ability to effectively educate students on these topics. Teacher education programmes must prioritize the development of pre-service instructors' knowledge in democratic values and political participation to ensure they are equipped to create inclusive and equitable learning environments that promote active citizenship and democratic principles (Leithwood, 2021).

Bektas (2021) reviewed a study on activity-based training with Social Studies pre-service instructors for increasing the thinking skills of learners. Pre-service Social Studies instructors' knowledge and democratic values have been conducted to understand the relationship between these two aspects. These studies aim to shed light on how pre-service teachers' knowledge of Social Studies content and their democratic values influence their teaching practices and the development of democratic citizenship among students.

One study by Köse, Azrak and Bayır (2020) examined the correlation between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and their ability to promote these values in the classroom. The results showed that teachers who had a strong understanding of democratic principles were more likely to incorporate democratic practices, such as student participation in decision-making, into their teaching. This suggests that a solid foundation in democratic values is crucial for pre-service teachers to effectively foster democratic citizenship among students.

Another study by Brown and Davis (2018) focused on pre-service Social Studies instructors' content knowledge and its impact on their ability to teach about democracy. The results indicated that teachers with a deep understanding of Social Studies content were more successful in engaging students in critical discussions about democracy, as they were able to provide accurate information and challenge misconceptions. This highlights the importance of equipping pre-service teachers with comprehensive content knowledge, which serves as a basis for promoting democratic values in the classroom.

Furthermore, study by Johnson *et al.* (2017) explored the function of instructor education programmes in developing pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and commitment to democracy. The research found that programmes emphasizing experiential learning opportunities, such as internships or community service projects, had a positive impact on participants' understanding of democratic values. These findings suggest that teacher education programmes should make available opportunities for pre-service instructors to actively engage with democratic practices outside the classroom setting.

In addition, a study by Anderson *et al.* (2019) examined the impact of professional development programmes on enhancing pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and attitudes towards democracy. The results showed that participation in high-quality professional development programmes led to substantial developments in teachers' understanding of democratic values and their confidence in teaching about democracy. This underscores the importance of ongoing professional development opportunities for pre-service teachers to continuously deepen their knowledge and strengthen their commitment to democratic values.

Using a multilevel analysis of the 2016 International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), Gómez and Suárez (2023) investigated the link between instructional methods and the civic knowledge and involvement of students from five Latin American and Caribbean nations. The findings show how educational, socio-demographic, and attitude elements interact intricately to shape students' political involvement and understanding. The ICCS cognition test revealed a negative association between extracurricular civic involvement and students' civic knowledge and engagement. Nonetheless, there was a favorable correlation found between civic education and cognitive skills, highlighting the significance of including civic education in the curriculum. Future study on the relationship between students' attitudes toward political involvement and civic knowledge results is highly promising. Considered together, these results highlight the necessity of a thorough approach to civic education as well as additional study to develop successful strategies.

One key finding from these empirical reviews is that pre-service Social Studies teachers often lack comprehensive knowledge about politics and government. For instance, a study by Willeck and Mendelberg (2021) found that many pre-service teachers struggled to correctly answer basic questions about the structure of government, electoral processes, and key political concepts. This knowledge gap is concerning, as it suggests that future educators may not be adequately equipped to teach students about important political issues, potentially hindering students' understanding of democratic processes.

Furthermore, research has also explored the influence of pre-service Social Studies instructors' own political beliefs on their eagerness to engage in political activities. A study conducted by Leung, Shek, Leung and Shek (2019) revealed that teachers who held more liberal or conservative ideologies were more likely to participate in political campaigns or join advocacy groups aligned with their beliefs. This finding suggests that a teacher's personal politics can influence their level of involvement in promoting civic participation among students.

However, it is vital to bear in mind that not all empirical studies have found a strong relationship between pre-service Social Studies educators' knowledge and their political participation. Some researchers argue that while content knowledge is essential for effective teaching, it may not directly translate into increased engagement in political activities. Instead, factors such as self-efficacy, motivation, and institutional support play significant roles in determining a teacher's level of involvement in promoting civic education (Solhaug, 2006).

Kuş (2015) review in study examining pre-service Social Studies instructors' knowledge and political participation highlight the importance of comprehensive content knowledge for effective teaching of politics and government. Additionally, these reviews emphasize the influence of a teacher's personal political beliefs on their engagement in political activities. However, further study is needed to better comprehend the complex interplay between knowledge, beliefs, and other factors that shape pre-service Social Studies instructors' involvement in promoting civic education.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive design of the correlational type. The research design was used to identify the knowledge of democratic values and political participation among pre-service teachers in Oyo State, Nigeria. The purpose of correlational survey research is to establish the relationship between two variables. This research design is considered adequate for the study because the purpose is to determine the relationship between the independent variable (pre-service teachers' knowledge) and the dependent variable (democratic values and political participation).

The population for the study comprised all pre-service Social Studies teachers in Oyo State, Nigeria. The rationale for involving pre-service Social Studies teachers is that they would later be involved in the teaching of Social Studies after graduation and also participate in political activities after graduation. The population is delimited to pre-service Social Studies teachers at Emmanuel Alayande University of Education, Oyo (formally Emmanuel Alayande College of Education), Oyo State College of Education, Lanlate and Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.

The sample for the study consisted of 300 pre-service Social Studies teachers in selected tertiary institutions in Oyo State. Using a multistage sampling procedure, three government-owned tertiary institutions were selected in Oyo State using the purposive sampling technique. The purpose is to ensure that only government-owned tertiary institutions that run Social Studies programmes are considered. In the second stage, the purposive sampling technique was used to select 200-level students. The choice of 200-level students as participants in this study is considered appropriate because the students are exposed to some democratic values and

political participation concepts in the Social Studies curriculum. At the third stage, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 100 pre-service teachers in each of the three selected schools. A total of 300 pre-service teachers were used in this study.

One self-designed instrument was used for the study. It is titled 'Pre-service Social Studies Teachers' Knowledge of Democratic Values and Political Participation Questionnaire' (PSSTKDVPPQ). The PSSTKDVPPQ contains two sections, namely, Section A and B. Section A contains five items which elicited demographic information of the respondents while Section B contained 20 multiple-choice items which are used to determining pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and political participation. The instrument was subjected validity by experts. To ensure the reliability of the instruments, trial-testing was carried out on a sample of 20 pre-service Social Studies' teachers outside the scope of the study as to determine the co-efficient values of the instruments. Thus, reliability coefficient values of 0.71 was found. Data collected for the study were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages as well as inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

Results

Research Question: What is the pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation in Oyo State?

In order to answer this research question, data collected on the 26 items on the pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and political participation Section B of the instrument were scored such that the minimum and maximum scores obtained in this scale were 0 and 26 respectively. Scores of the respondents considering pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and political participation on the scale 0-12 were adjudged as having 'Low Level'. Scores of the respondents considering pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and political participation on the scale 13-18 were adjudged as having 'Moderate Level'. Scores of the respondents considering pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and political participation on the scale 19-26 were adjudged as having 'High Level'. The summary of the results is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of the pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation in Oyo State

S/N	Level	Range	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1.	Low	0-12	27	9.0
2.	Moderate	13-18	88	29.3
3.	High	19-26	185	61.7
Total			300	100.0

N = 300

Results in Table 1 shows the descriptive analysis of the pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation in Oyo State. It can be observed from the Table that the pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation was high at 61.7% in Oyo State.

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in Oyo State.

In order to test this hypothesis, data collected on the pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical tool. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) of the relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in Oyo State

Groups	N	Mean	SD	r	Sig.(2-tailed)	Remark
Knowledge	300	19.53	3.31			
DVPP	300	26.55	3.29			
					0.791	.000 Significant

($r = 0.791$; $p < 0.05$)

Note: DVPP implies Democratic Values and Political Participation

Results in Table 2 shows that there was significant relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in Oyo State ($r = 0.791$; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in Oyo State is hereby rejected. The result implies that pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge predicts their democratic values and political participation in the study area.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study showed that the pre-service Social Studies teachers' level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation was high in Oyo State. The result implies that Social Studies pre-service teachers have good knowledge of democratic values and political participation. This may not be separated from the fact that they been well grounded politically in Social Studies content and as such increase their democratic values and that they use the avenue to impact the knowledge and bring about development in the society. The result was in consonant with the findings of Le, Dineke & Wilfried (2021) in a study on pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and democratic values have been conducted to understand the relationship between these two aspects. Their studies shed light on how pre-service instructors' knowledge of Social Studies content and their democratic values influence their teaching practices and the development of democratic citizenship among students. The finding also supports one study by Köse, Azrak and Bayır (2020) who examined the relationship between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge of democratic values and their ability to promote these values in the classroom. The results reviewed that teachers who had a strong understanding of democratic principles were more likely to incorporate democratic practices, such as student participation in decision-making, into their teaching. This suggests that a solid foundation in democratic values is crucial for pre-service teachers to effectively foster democratic citizenship among students.

The findings further corroborate another study by Brown and Davis (2018) that teachers with a deep understanding of Social Studies content were more successful in engaging students in critical discussions about democracy, as they were able to provide accurate information and challenge misconceptions. This highlights the importance of equipping pre-service teachers with comprehensive content knowledge, which serves as a basis for promoting democratic values in the classroom.

Findings of the study also showed that there was significant correlation between Social Studies pre-service teachers' knowledge and democratic values and political participation in Oyo State. The result implies that Social Studies pre-service teachers' knowledge play significant role in predicting democratic values and political participation. This suggests that pre-service teachers who align themselves with a certain political ideology are more probable to incorporate their beliefs into their teaching practices, potentially influencing students' understanding of civic engagement. This contradicts the findings of Reichert and Torney-Purta (2019) examining the correlation between Social Studies pre-service teachers' knowledge and political participation have shed light on the crucial role of education in shaping civic engagement. These studies have primarily focused on investigating the extent to which Social Studies teachers possess the indispensable knowledge and skills to efficiently teach political topics, as well as how their own political beliefs and experiences influence their engagement in political activities. One key finding from these empirical reviews is that pre-service Social Studies teachers often lack comprehensive knowledge about politics and government. Meanwhile the results support, a study by Willeck and Mendelberg (2021) who found that many pre-service teachers struggled to correctly answer basic questions about the structure of government, electoral processes, and key political concepts. This knowledge gap is concerning, as it suggests that future educators may not be adequately equipped to teach students about important political issues, potentially hindering students' understanding of democratic processes.

The findings further support Leung, et. al. (2019) that teachers who held more liberal or conservative ideologies were more likely to participate in political campaigns or join advocacy groups aligned with their beliefs. This finding suggests that a teacher's personal politics can influence their level of involvement in promoting civic participation among students. However, it is imperative to note that not all empirical research have found a strong correlation between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge and their political participation. Some researchers argue that while content knowledge is essential for effective teaching, it may not directly translate into increased engagement in political activities. Instead, factors such as self-efficacy, motivation, and institutional support play significant roles in determining a teacher's level of involvement in promoting civic education (Solhaug, 2006). Kuş (2015) review in study examining Social Studies pre-service instructors' knowledge and political participation highlight the importance of comprehensive content knowledge for effective teaching of politics and government. Additionally, these reviews emphasize the influence of a teacher's personal political beliefs on their engagement in political activities. However, further research is needed to better understand the complex interplay between knowledge, beliefs, and other factors that shape pre-service Social Studies educators' involvement in promoting civic education.

Conclusion

In Oyo State Nigeria, pre-service Social Studies teachers had a high level of knowledge of democratic values and political participation. Based on the above findings, the study concluded that the Social Studies education curriculum helps in promoting

democratic values and enhances political participation among pre-service Social Studies teachers in Oyo State, irrespective of level of study. The study found a significant correlation between pre-service Social Studies teachers' knowledge, democratic values, and political participation in Oyo State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

- i. Allow pre-service teachers to talk and do activities that support deep thought about political matters and democratic standards.
- ii. Social Studies teachers should be encouraged to use various methods and strategies to teach citizenship and political contents of the curriculum. This will help in promoting pre-service teachers and students to participate actively in politics and can help in promoting positive democratic values in them. Set up professional development sessions for pre-service teachers.
- iii. Foster a culture of open dialogue and respectful debate among pre-service teachers to cultivate a deep appreciation for democratic values and civic responsibility.

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